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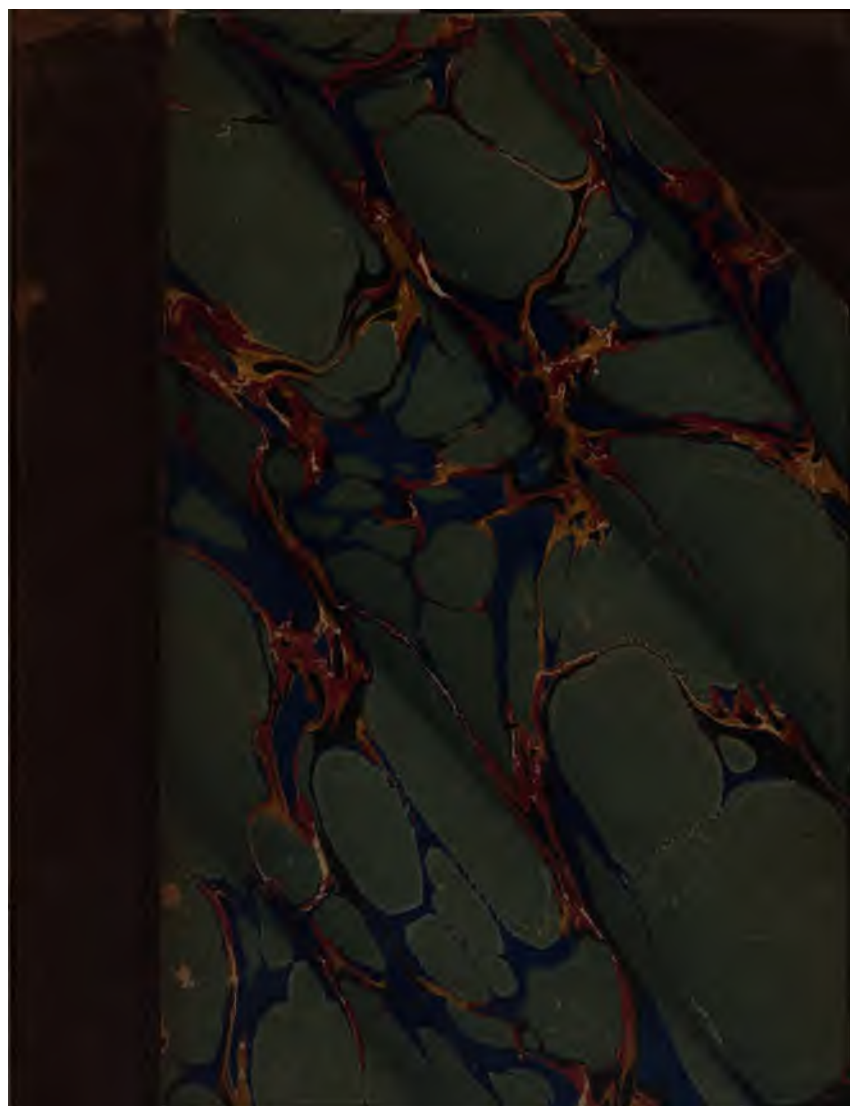
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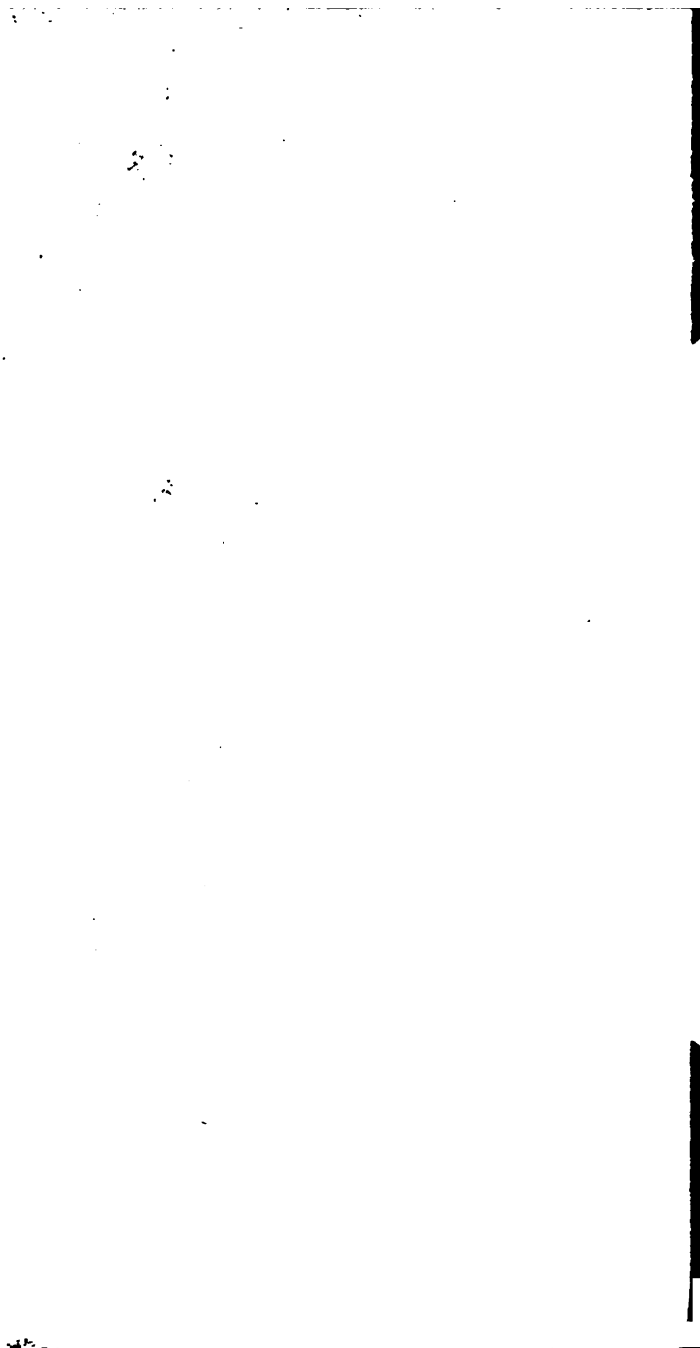
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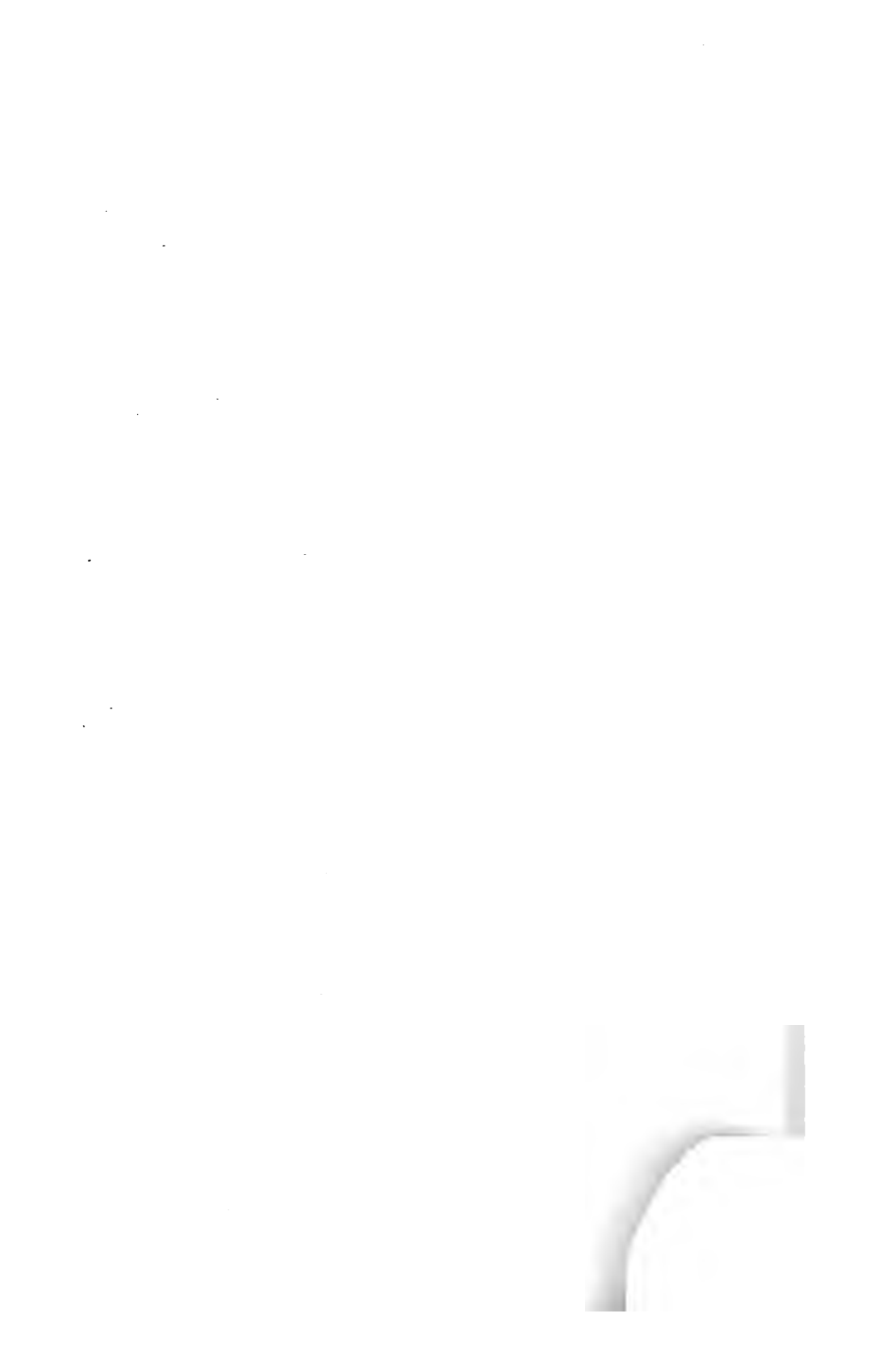
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1. b. 11.





A
TREATISE
ON THE
Government of the Church,
IN WHICH THE
DIVINE RIGHT OF EPISCOPACY
Is maintained, and the doctrine of the
SUPREMACY OF THE BISHOP OF ROME
Proved to be contrary to the SCRIPTURES,
And writings of the FATHERS of the first three hundred years
after Christ.—IN WHICH ALSO
Several important points are explained and illustrated, viz.
THE
Unity of the Catholic Church,
Sin of Schism, Nature and Vindication of the Establishment
And Liturgy of the united church of
ENGLAND & IRELAND, &c.
WITH
Occasional remarks on several POPISH books lately published.
Edw. ————— Barwick
COMPILED FROM THE MOST CELEBRATED DIVINES.

— — — — —
“ And they continued stedfastly in the apostles doctrine
and fellowship (*or communion,*) and in breaking of bread,
and in prayers,” Acts 2. 42.

“ It must needs be that offences come, but woe be to that
man by whom the offence cometh.” Matt. 18. 17.

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DUBLIN.

1811.

THE LANCET

ON THE

GOVERNMENT OF THE COLONIES

BY

THE LANCET

IN CONNECTION WITH

THE LANCET

THE LANCET

THE LANCET

THE LANCET

AND

THE LANCET

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1871

PREFACE.

I AM persuaded, that the following treatise which attempts to explain the nature of the GOVERNMENT which Christ has established in his church, will require no apology, since all who profess themselves christians are so closely interested in the subject of it.

That gross ignorance on this subject, prevails at present among all, even among the members of the church (for whom this treatise is principally intended,) is too evident to require any proof. And how unnatural is it, that the members of any society should be ignorant of its origin, and establishment, the principles on which it was instituted, and the rules by which its credit and dignity have been supported? This ignorance, as a layman* of the church of England observes, which on other occasions is only extremely absurd, when applied to the principles of our ecclesiastical constitution, is highly reprehensible in itself, and attended with the most dangerous consequences.

Many will be surprised, and look upon it as a novelty to be told (what yet is the old and true doctrine)

* Treatise on the Church, &c. by Wm. Stevens, Esq. 1709.

PREFACE.

that to that *sound* and *catholic* part of Christ's church, which is established in the country where he was born, or where the providence of God has fixed him, he is bound to adhere; that to all its ordinances in indifferent matters, all those rules, which it has directed to be observed, for the purpose of edification, it is his duty to conform; that he who separates from such a particular church, does it at his peril; that he is committing an act, for which he must be seriously and deeply accountable at the day of judgment; that, in short, schism, independently of all considerations of doctrine, though it should be no part of its object to work any express corruption of the truth, is in itself a grievous and heinous sin; hurtful in the greatest degree to the general interests of Christianity; and big with the most serious consequences to the individual.

Custom indeed, the loose writing of some of the clergy, and the general silence of the body upon the Constitution of the Christian Church, have so far reconciled us to the divisions that have taken place among christians, that they are no longer seen in the light in which they were seen in the primitive days of the church; whilst charity, forbidding us to speak harshly of the spiritual condition of our brethren, has in a manner tended to efface the sin of schism from our minds. — In the liturgy of the church we pray against *schism*. If by their *writing* or *conduct*, the clergy at the same time give encouragement to it; will they not, in so doing, be thought to be acting in contradiction to the profession which they have made? But this, it is to be feared, is the case with all those, who instead of pointing out to the laity the danger attendant upon their officiously meddling with the ministerial office, and the duty of submitting to those teachers, who by authority are set over them, by their loose writing or irregular practice lead them to the very opposite conclusion. And what reasonable hope can be entertained, that the unity of the church will be in any degree preserved, whilst those whose office it is to preserve it, become the instruments of its dissolution?

When therefore, such loose opinions as these prevail, entirely destructive of the unity of the christian church, — when every one must perceive the increasing

PREFACE.

defection from the communion and authority of this church, silence on the part of its friends, whether clergy or laity, becomes criminal, and a cold neutrality is inexcusable. To use the words (with the alteration of a single phrase) of archdeacon Daubeney: When I see so many apparently idle and unconcerned, whilst the enemy is digging and undermining the very ground on which they stand; and at the same time consider, that they who help not to support the church when she is in distress, do in reality contribute to pull her down; in writing, as an honest *lay-member* of that church ought to write on her subject, I feel that satisfaction which must ever accompany a conscientious discharge of duty.

I am sensible, that the doctrines maintained in the following pages are become unpopular in this age of boasted illumination; that they are too contracted for the expansive liberality, or (to speak more justly) the religious indifference of the times, and that the maintainers of them are branded with the name of *bigots*. Professing myself to be one of those bigots, and being perfectly satisfied with the company in which I am placed, my only hope is, that I may be thought worthy to continue in it.

To this important subject, the attention of the English and Scotch clergy has been turned for some years past, and by them the world has been favoured with some excellent treatises. I shall mention three in particular: 1. a Guide to the Church, by the Rev. C. Daubeney, archdeacon of Sarum; 2d edition, 1804, strongly recommended by the bishops of Gloucester and Lincoln.—2. Primitive Order vindicated, in answer to Campbell's Lectures, by the Right Rev. Dr. Skinner, bishop of Aberdeen, in Scotland, 1803.—3. The Nature and Guilt of Schism, &c. in eight sermons, preached before the university of Oxford, by Rev. T. Mesurier, 1808. But it is to be lamented that very few indeed, of these, or of similar publications have been imported into this country.

The following treatise, the reader will perceive, is almost entirely compiled from the writings of our celebrated divines. This method of compilation I preferred, not only on account of the success which appears to have attended some late compilations of a similar nature, particularly bishop Huntingford's Call to English protes-

tants, but, to use the words of Dr. Wake, "I hoped that quotations from departed writers of great and deserved fame, would find a more general and unprejudiced acceptance with all sorts of men, than any thing that could be written by any one now living, who, if esteemed by some, is yet in danger of being despised by more." Accordingly, as it is in general, collected from authors many of whom flourished above one hundred years since, the reader is to expect, not elegance of style, but a plain and correct statement of facts, accompanied, I hope, with correspondent reasoning. At the same time, although I have managed this dispute in a manner somewhat different from other authors, and have endeavoured to reduce the tedious and intricate disputes about *schism*, church authority, church establishments, &c. into a clear, regular, and consistent *method*, yet it will easily be perceived, that my *principles* are the very same, which have been constantly received and maintained (with very few exceptions) by all the learned divines of our church.*

If any of our Romanists will be pleased to consider what I have said with respect to the supremacy of the bishop of Rome, with that attention and impartiality which is due to religious subjects, I presume to think he will perceive, that the christian religion does not oblige him to acknowledge the bishop of Rome's authority in this kingdom. It will plainly appear that *universal* authority has no foundation in the scriptures; and that it was unknown to the primitive fathers, who conceived themselves obliged to hold communion with him, (or any other bishop,) only as long as he continued catholic and orthodox; but when he became an heretic, we find that the bishops of those pure ages, anathematized him, and refused to have any communication with

* The opinions maintained in this treatise are absurdly described as belonging to the *high church school*; as if there were such parties in the church as high church and low church. The latter, as every one knows, has for many years disappeared: it did not flourish greatly even in the days of Hoadley, and seems to have expired with archdeacon Blackburne. It could never in fact be in high repute; for it must always have borne the appearance of hollowness and treachery. See Le Mesurier's Bamp. lect. p. 431. Even papists themselves acknowledge that at present "both learned and unlearned doctors condemn the Hoadleyan theory on the nature of church government." Prot. Apology, &c. 1809, p. 223v.

PREFACE.

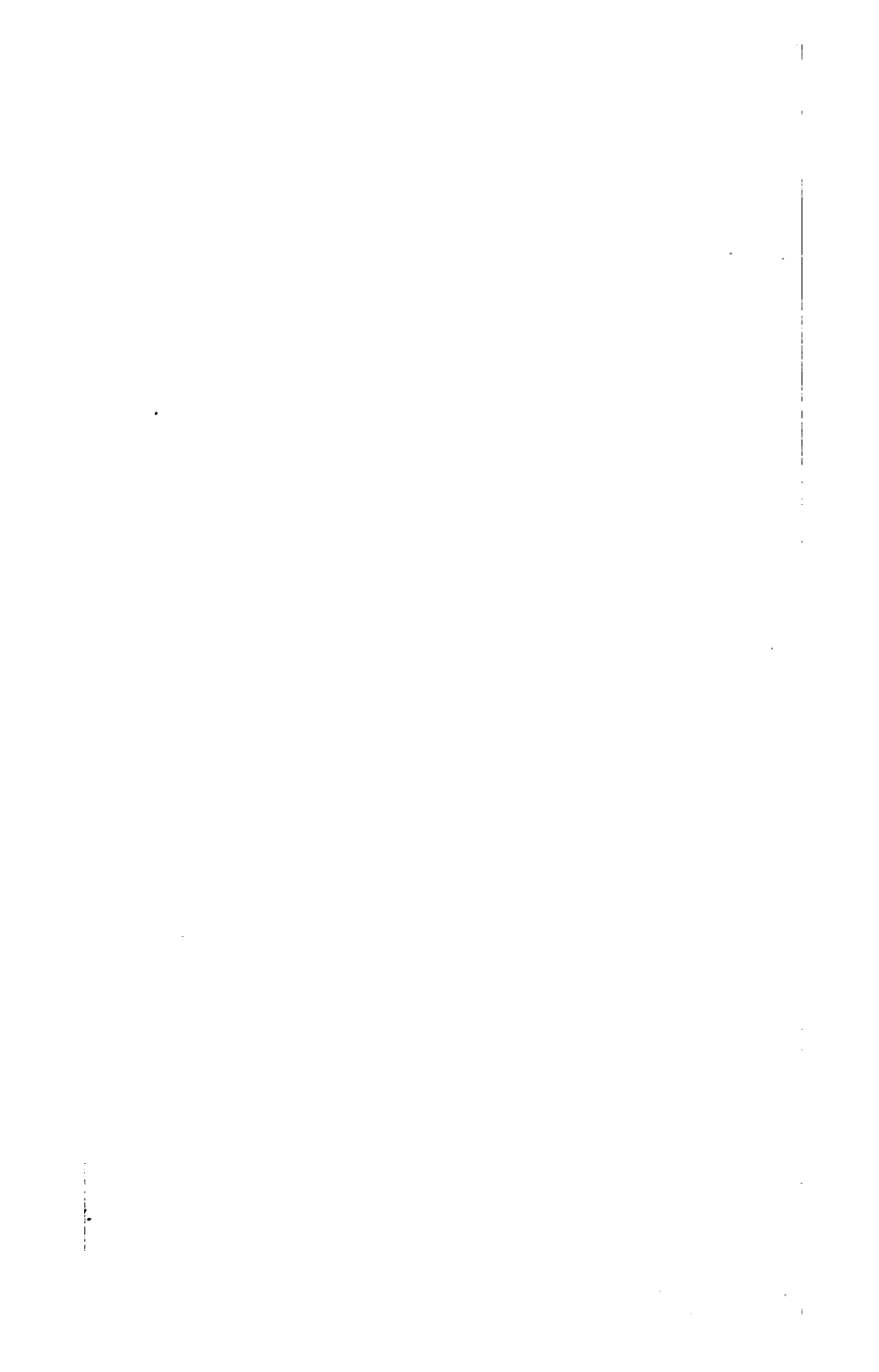
him. How much more excusable then are our reformed churches for rejecting his communion, since he not only invades the primitive rights of bishops, but attempts to obtrude on us as articles of faith, his decrees, which are contrary to reason, scripture, and the primitive fathers.*

As for the performance itself, I must expect from the christian reader, some favourable allowances, for any oversights and imperfections that may be found in it. And if at any time, I have either mistaken or misrepresented the church in defence of which I write, I shall upon information, with all submission acknowledge the error. To conclude, I earnestly beseech Almighty God, of his infinite mercy, to make all those who shall peruse this book, honest and impartial, diligent in the search of truth, and heartily willing, not only to receive, but also to acknowledge conviction.

EDWARD BARWICK.

Tam. Coll. Dublin.
May, 1811.

* Those men most surely be very ignorant of the nature and spirit of popery, who suppose that there is any necessity, at present, of exposing the pernicious errors of the Romish church, and of guarding our people against being infected by them. Let such men consider well the following words of Bishop Stillingfleet: "While we have such restless adversaries (as the Romish priests) to deal with, part of our danger lies in being too secure of the *genuineness* of our cause." *Ded. to Anth. T. of Shaftsbury*, vol. v. 117.



CONTENTS.

<p><i>ed.—Obj. concerning excommunication, answered.—Exhortation to the members of the church by bishop Beveridge,</i></p> <p>CHAP. VII. <i>Appendix.—How far the church's power extends in decreeing rites and ceremonies.—The church, as established by law, vindicated.—Extent of the civil power in church affairs.</i></p> <p>SECOND PART.—CHAP. VIII. <i>Of the unity of the catholic church.—All bishops originally of equal authority.—Bishop of Rome possesses no authority by divine right over other bishops.</i></p> <p>CHAP. IX. <i>The supremacy of the bishop of Rome confuted from the scriptures.</i></p> <p>CHAP. X. <i>The supremacy of the bishop of Rome confuted from the fathers of the first three centuries after Christ.—Ignatius.—Clemens.—Apostolic canons.—Victor and the Asian churches.—Irenaus.—Tertullian.—Cyprian.—Eusebius.—Rise of the bishop of Rome's usurpation over the rights of other bishops.—African churches.—Objections from Augustin, Optatus, and Jerom answered.</i></p> <p>CHAP. XI. <i>Brief defence of the reformation of the church of England and Ireland.—In ancient writers, the catholic church taken in two senses: the general one, in which it was put for all faithful churches united into one body, under Christ; and the particular, when it was used for a particular church.—The Roman church, in ancient times, was considered only as a particular church.—Separation from the communion of the bishop of Rome, justified from ancient examples.—Account of the Greek church.—Obj. from St. Austin, answered.—Our charge of idolatry against the church of Rome, justified.—Objections concerning infallibility, answered.—Fallacy used by Romish writers, that the church in communion with Rome, was the catholic church.—Necessity of succession of doctrine, as well as succession of bishops.—Council of Trent not general.—Foreign appeals unknown in ancient times.—Our church justifiable in charging sectaries with disobedience to her; notwithstanding she allows them to examine her doctrines by scripture.—True method of preventing schisms.—Infallible judges and general councils cannot prevent schisms.—Romish schisms and dissensions.—Apology for the disputes among the divines of our church.—Ambiguity of the Trent decrees.—Uncertainty</i></p>	<p>67</p> <p>92</p> <p>103</p> <p>106</p> <p>120</p>
---	--

CONTENTS

of the Romish faith.—Church of England offers all-satisfaction to mankind that it follows the true sense of scripture.—Certainty and safety of the communion of our church, and manifest hazard of salvation in the Romish church.—1. As to the positive articles of our faith.—Novelty of the Trent creed.—2. As to infallibility.—Pope's supremacy.—Prayers to saints.—Images.—Prayers in an unknown tongue.—Transubstantiation.—Half communion.—Purgatory, &c. 146

CONCLUSION.—Romanists disguise their religion in Protestant countries, and why.—Account of the Essay for catholic communion; Protestant Apology, &c.—Absurdity of the Romanists proving the infallibility of the church of Rome, until they prove that its doctrine and discipline are agreeable to scripture and antiquity.—Church of Rome receives the interpretation of Scripture, not from the fathers, but from the present Roman catholic church.—Pope's infallibility and temporal dominion, doctrines of the present Roman church.—Impracticability of an union between the church of England and Rome, until the bishop of Rome's authority be abolished. 162

INTRODUCTION.

It has been speciously contended, that it matters not* to what communion we belong, if we are but sincere in our profession. But are those who make the remark, or those who incautiously adopt it, aware of the palpable falsehoods to which this principle would carry them? Thus, it matters not whether a man be a mahometan or a christian, an heathen, a jew, an infidel or heretic, if he be sincere in his profession. If sincerity, as such, independent of any particular way of worship can recommend man to the favour of God, then there can be no difference as to merit, between a sincere martyr, and a sincere persecutor; and he that burns a christian, if he be but in earnest, hath the same title to God's favour, as he that is burnt for believing in Jesus Christ. St. Paul, we know, before his conversion, persecuted the christians. Now, as he had a good meaning in all he did, to what end was he converted, when his sincerity would have saved him in his former way? After his mind was better enlightened, he pronounced himself to have been the greatest of sinners, for what he had thus done in the sincerity of his heart.*

In regard of such as are out of Christ's Catholic Church, we trust that God will make a merciful allow-

* Jones's Essay on the Church, p. 19. Lond. 1800.

ance for their errors. The salvation of all the faithful members of the church, as it was established by the apostles, is secured to them by a covenant: they are under promise, and "he is faithful that promised." But it is impossible to speak, with the same assurance of faith, of those who hold no communion with any apostolic church—who as they do not enter into *the fellowship* of Christ's religion, have no certain title to its glories and rewards. If he, who neglected to hear the church, was by our Saviour's command to be considered as having forfeited the privileges of a christian, and again become as an heathenman and a publican, Matt. 18. 7. —if the apostles were most particular in forbidding, and severe in condemning all schism in the church,—we do not think ourselves secure, except while we are grafted upon some sound branch, and derive our nourishment from the body of the true vine. It is therefore, as Mr. Jones remarks, of infinite consequence, that we should be able to know, with certainty, whether we are in the church, or out of it. If we are out of it, we are in the world. If we had been out of the ark, we should have been drowned. It is true, we may be in the church, and yet be lost; for was not Ham in the ark, who was a reprobate? But if we are out of the church, how can we be saved?*

It becomes therefore a leading object of christian duty to enquire where the true church is to be found; into what communion we may enter as a part of Christ's catholic church, and hope to inherit the promises. Now the first step necessary in this enquiry will be to understand what the true church is.

CHAP. I.

Of the Nature and Constitution of the Catholic Church.

In general, the Catholic Church may be thus defined: *It is the one universal society of all christian people.*

* This is also the language of the *Hemiliæ*. Hom. against contention.

*incorporated by the new covenant in baptism under Jesus Christ its supreme head, and distributed under lawful governors and pastors into particular churches holding communion with each other, in all the essentials of christian faith, and worship, and discipline.**

This is agreeable to the definition given by our church in the 19th article, in which "the visible church is described to be "a congregation† of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered, according to Christ's ordinance, in all things that of necessity are requisite to the same." For the sacraments cannot, in the judgment of our church, be *duly* administered according to Christ's ordinance, but by those ministers, who are "lawfully called and sent into the Lord's vineyard," Art. 29. That these are the true notes or marks by which the catholic church is to be known, is the opinion of our most eminent divines; ‡ "Wherever," says Dr. King, archbishop of Dublin, "we find the *faith of Christ*, and the persons professing it, living in submission to their *regular pastors*, there we have found a branch of the catholic church. 'Tis by these marks we must find the catholic church, if we would not mistake the society of schismatics and heretics, nay of heathens for her."

The first part of the above-mentioned definition is generally acknowledged, viz. I. that the catholic church is *the one universal society of all christian people, incorporated by the new covenant in baptism, under Jesus Christ its su-*

* This definition, and the principal part of this first chapter, are abridged from Dr. Scott's *Christian Life*, and Dean Sherlock's defence of bishop Stillingfleet, 1681. p. 137.

† When our articles were made, the words *congregation* and *the church* were synonymous. See Brett's *divine right of episcopacy*, p. 2.

‡ Bingham's *antiquities of the christian church*. "To maintain the purity of the catholic *faith*, and live under the discipline and government of a catholic *bishop*, who himself lived in communion with the catholic church, were the characteristic notes of any man's being in the communion of the church." Book 6. c. 9. & 16. c. 17. Bishop Bramhall's *works*, p. 143. Dean Stanley's *faith, &c. of a church of England man*, chap. 1. 9th. Edit. 1783. Sherlock's *discourse on the notes, and vindication of do. against Fairfax a Jesuit, in Preservative against popery*, Tit. 3. 44. Field of the church. p. 31. 80. Kettlewell's *works*, 1. 675.

preme head. For the scriptures expressly tell us that the church is a body, whereof Christ is the head; "he gave him to be head over all things to the church which is his body," Eph. 1. 22, 23. Into this society Christ commanded his disciples to admit all nations, baptizing them, and "to preach the gospel to every creature," Matt. 28, 29. The legal bond which unites the church, and renders its members one regular corporation, is the new covenant; and as God ratified his covenant with the Jews in the visible solemnity of circumcision, so, in place of this, Christ introduced the sign of baptism, to ratify the new covenant between God and us. For having by baptism, entered into the service of the living God, we are directed and have promised to resist and renounce the enemies of our salvation, the world, the flesh and the devil: that by a sincere performance of the baptismal covenant, we may be entitled to the blessings and privileges of the holy gospel, viz. pardon of sin, and eternal life through Jesus Christ. And hence we are said to be "baptized into the body" or church of Christ, 1 Cor. 12. 13. because baptism which is our admission into the christian covenant, is only in other words our admission into the christian church, which is the body of christian people confederated by the new covenant. That which makes all christian people one body and society, is their being all united under one and the same supreme head and governor. Accordingly St. Paul tells us that as there is but *one body*, i. e. one church, so there is but *one Lord* or supreme governor of that church. Eph. 4. 4, 5.—Col. 1. 18.—Eph. 5. 23.

II. *The catholic church is the society of all christian people* DISTRIBUTED INTO PARTICULAR CHURCHES; which distribution is made for the convenience of divine worship. At first indeed, the whole catholic church was only a single congregation, but this in a short time increased so fast, that they could no longer exercise the public worship of God, in one place or assembly; and therefore the first distribution of it was into several congregations, which in scripture are called by the name of churches, as being similar parts of the catholic church, even as every breath of air, is called air, and every drop of water, water. For thus, those believers, who were accustomed to assemble in any one particular house, to worship God, are frequently called churches; as the

church in the house of Nymphas 1 Cor. 16. 5. In which houses in all probability, there was an upper room, consecrated and set apart, according to the custom of the Jews, for divine worship, in which upper rooms, not only the believers of the family, but other neighbouring christians were wont to assemble for the public exercise of divine worship.

But these congregations growing numerous, there was made a *second distribution* of them (*for the convenience of government,*) by which many of these neighbouring congregations, were collected into one body, under *one head* or *bishop*, who was the common guide of all the members, whether *lay* or *clergy*, appertaining to them. And these collections of several congregations under their several bishops or governors, are also frequently called *churches*; for instance, the church of Corinth contained in it several congregations,* and therefore though in the dedication of his Epistle, the Apostle calls it, "the church of God (in the singular number) which is at Corinth" 1 Cor. 12. yet in the Epistle he enjoins that "the women should keep silence in the churches;" from which it is evident that in that church, there were several churches or congregations; and thus we also read of the church of Jerusalem, of Antioch, Ephesus, &c. which churches doubtless consisted of *several congregations*, in and about those populous cities, which were all united in one body, under the inspection of *one governor*, whom we now call *bishops*.

III. The catholic church is *the one universal society of all christian people, distributed into particular churches (under lawful governors and pastors,)* HOLDING COMMUNION WITH EACH OTHER. What these *lawful* governors and pastors, are, I shall fully explain hereafter. By particular churches, holding communion with each other, I mean, owning each other as parts of the same body, and admitting each others members, as occasion serves, into actual communion with them in all their religious offices. The communion which particular churches are obliged to, as they are *similar parts* and

* This is clearly proved by Mr. Bennet in the defence of the Disc. on schism, p. 3. and answer to Shepherd's considerations, p. 1.

distributions of the catholic church, is, that they should not divide into separate churches, so as to exclude each others members from communicating in each others worship, whenever they have occasion to travel from one church to another. For so long as there is no rupture between distant churches, no declared disowning of each other, no express refusal of any act of communion to each others members, they may be truly said to maintain all *necessary* communion with each other.

The catholic church is *one* by the communion of *all* its parts, and therefore they who break communion with any one part, must necessarily disunite themselves from the *whole*. For when two churches separate from one another, it must be either because the one requires such terms of communion as are not catholic, or because the other refuses such as are. Now that church which requires *sinful* or uncatholic terms of communion, does hereby exclude, not only one, but all parts of the catholic church, from its communion (because they are all equally obliged not to communicate with any church on sinful terms of communion;) but, in doing so, separates itself from the communion of the catholic church. And so on the other hand, that church which refuses communion in any other church upon *lawful* and catholic terms, does hereby separate itself from the communion of all parts of the catholic church. All those particular churches therefore, into which the catholic church is distributed, must be in communion with each other, otherwise they are so far from being distributions of the catholic church, that they are only so many schisms and divisions from it.

But it must be observed, that in a divided state of the church, there may be different communions, and yet both remain parts of the catholic church, as in the excommunications of old, about keeping Easter; and in case of a precipitate sentence, when one bishop takes upon him to excommunicate others *for little or no cause*, and against the advice of his brethren.*

IV. And lastly, the communion which these particular churches, into which the catholic church is distributed, hold with each other, is three-fold: 1. In all the *essentials* of christian Faith. 2. In all the *essentials*

* Bishop Stillingfleet's works, vol. 6. 675. London cases, 1. p. 123.—and Preservative against popery. vol. 2. App. 95. Kings answer to Manby, p. 4.

of christian *Worship*. 3. In all the *essentials* of christian *Discipline*.—1. In all the *ESSENTIALS* of CHRISTIAN FAITH. By the *essentials* of Faith,* I mean those doctrines, the belief of which is necessary to the very being of christianity; for as in all arts and sciences there are some first principles upon which the whole scheme of their doctrines depend, and the denial of which, like removing the foundation of a building, dissolves and ruins the whole structure; so in christianity there are some principles so fundamental to it, as that the removal of them shakes the whole scheme of it in pieces. Now the great fundamental, as the apostle tells us, is Jesus Christ, “for other foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ,” 1 Cor. 3. 11.; and the apostle pronounces those men apostates from christianity, who “hold not the head,” which is Jesus Christ, Col. 2. 19. But yet the bare belief of Jesus Christ, or of this proposition that Christ came from God, is not all that is essential to the christian faith, which includes not only his mission from God, but also the end of his mission, viz: to be a mediator between God and man. For *christianity* as it is distinguished from *natural religion*, is nothing but the religion of the mediator, as consisting wholly of the doctrine of the mediator, together with the duties thence arising; so that whatever proposition, the mediatorship of Christ necessarily and immediately implies, it is a *fundamental* article of the christian faith, which no man can deny, without innovating on the whole religion, and turning it into a quite different doctrine from true and real christianity. For this proposition, that Christ came down from God to mediate between God and man, includes the whole doctrine of the gospel: and therefore whatever proposition is so either *necessarily* included in it; or so *inseparably conjoined* with it as that the denial of it doth by necessary and immediate consequence overthrow the mediation of our Saviour, it must be essential to the christian faith; and the more necessary connection there is between any particular doctrine, and this all-comprehending doctrine of the mediation, the more necessary and essential it is to the christian faith.†

* Scotts christian life, and Sherlock def. ubi supra. Field on the church p. 77. 1633.

† See Sherlock's vindication of def. of Stillingfleet, p. 248. 1682. where he proves that “the denial of the godhead of the

Now whosoever believes not, or at least denies any essential part of the christian faith, is not a christian, and that, not only because he wants a part of that faith which denominates men christians, but by disbelieving that part, he does by necessary consequence overthrow the whole of christianity, for so Tertullian de præscrip. c. 37. expressly asserts, "they who are heretics, cannot be christians." Hence it is that heretics, who are such as obstinately deny any *fundamental* article of christianity, are in scripture ranked with heathens and infidels; and the governors of the church are required to exclude them from all christian communion, Gal. 1. 8. to reject them, Tit. 3. 10.—1 Tim. 6. 5: and if heretical persons are to be thus treated, then much more are heretical churches, and therefore as such, must be utterly unqualified for christian communion. Therefore a common agreement in all the *essentials* of christian faith, which is the opposite of heresy, is necessarily included in catholic communion; accordingly the scripture frequently presses all christian people to this common agreement as a most essential part of their communion with each other; for they are required "to mind or think the same thing," Phil. 2. 2.—2 Cor. 13. 11.—1 Cor. 1. 10. to "hold fast the form of sound words" 2 Tim. 1. 13. Phil. 1. 27. to "keep that which is committed to us" 1 Tim. 6. 20. which is that "one form of doctrine which was delivered" to us, Rom. 6. 17. The meaning of all which is, not to oblige us to be of one mind and judgment in *all* points of religion; for that is no more in our power, than it is to be all of one stature; but that we should all unanimously consent in all those *fundamental* articles of which that *one faith* consists, which is the common creed of christians; so that it is not the differing of one church from another in doctrines, that are either remote from or near the foundations of christianity, that dissolves their communion in the christian faith; but so long as the essential doctrines of the gospel are secured on both sides, no corrupt doctrines on either side can warrant a breach of communion between them. It is true,

Son, and the Holy Ghost, overthrows the whole doctrine of salvation by Christ, as it is taught in the new testament, and that we cannot truly believe the great fundamental doctrine of salvation by Christ, without the belief of the holy trinity."

if the erring church *imposes* the *belief* of its *errors*, as a *condition* of its communion, no church or christian, that believes them to be errors can lawfully communicate with them, for no man can believe that which is false.*

So that there is no error can separate any church or christian from the catholic communion of faith, but only heresy, which is a *perverse* renunciation of some essential part, or fundamental article of that faith.

II. The particular churches into which the catholic church is divided, hold communion with each other, in all the ESSENTIALS of CHRISTIAN WORSHIP. By these, I mean, the invocation of the one eternal God, through the one mediator Jesus Christ, and the participation of the two sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper. Hence the apostle tells us, that as there is but *one* common *faith* wherein all true christians communicate with each other, so there is but "*one Lord*," Eph. 4. 4. to address to, and "*one mediator between God and man*," for us to address by, 1 Tim. 2. 5. and therefore to address to this *one God*, by this *one Mediator*, is an essential part of christian worship. And the same apostle tells us that there is but *one baptism*," Eph. 4. 4. and the "*cup of blessing*," and "*bread*," "*of which we are all partakers*," 1 Cor. 10. 16, 17. and therefore to participate of these sacraments, must also be *essential* to christian worship; so that all those particular churches that admit each others members upon lawful terms, to communicate with them in worshipping this one God, through this one mediator, and in this one baptism, and one eucharistical bread and cup, are so far in communion with the church

* "A church may be guilty of some speculative errors, which may do no injury to common christianity, and then we may very safely communicate with that church, if they do not *impose* on us the *belief* of those errors; which few churches do, but upon their own immediate members, excepting the church of Rome. For instance, the Lutheran doctrine of consubstantiation, is as false, though not so absurd as the Popish transubstantiation, but yet we may lawfully communicate with the Lutheran church, where we may do it without professing our belief of consubstantiation.—If the errors be such as are not merely speculative, but corrupt their worship; then we must not join in those acts of worship, that are corrupted by them; as the Popish Mass is by the doctrine of transubstantiation." Preservative against Popery, Tit. 4. 69.

catholic. For in these acts of worship consists the principal part of christian communion, and therefore that church which refuses either to admit other churches to communicate with her in these acts of worship, or to communicate with them in these, upon lawful terms, doth so far separate itself from the christian communion. If on the one hand, it has sophisticated its worship with any unlawful intermixtures, so that there is no participating with her in the one, without partaking with her in the other : if we cannot pray with her to the *one* God by the *one* mediator, without praying to *creatures* too, or praying to *other* mediators also ; if we cannot partake with her in her baptism, without partaking in some *sinful* rites of baptism ; if we cannot be admitted to receive the Lord's supper with her, without receiving it by halves, or being obliged to pay divine homage to its elements, in this case all christians and churches are utterly excluded by her from communicating with her in the *essentials* of christian worship. And so on the other hand, if a church forbid its members to communicate upon occasion with any other church, upon lawful terms, in so doing, it divides itself from the communion of the catholic church ; and though that church it refuses to communicate with, should through the neglect of its discipline have a great many bad men as well as good in it ; though it should require the observation of a great many different rites and ceremonies ; yet so long as the *essentials* of its worship are kept *pure* and *entire*, and are not so blended with unlawful intermixtures, but that we may safely partake of them, without being obliged to partake of any *sin* ; in this case, I say, to refuse to communicate with it, is to separate from the communion of the catholic church. For the same reason that any church refuses to communicate with this church, it must refuse to communicate with *all* other churches in the world ; because we cannot to this day, nor ever could communicate with any church in the world, in which there are not some defects of discipline, some mixtures of bad men with good, and some indifferent modes and ceremonies of worship.

III. And lastly, another thing wherein those particular churches, into which the catholic church is distributed, communicate with each other, is in all the *ESSENTIALS* OF CHRISTIAN GOVERNMENT AND DISCIPLINE. For though the particular modes and circumstances of

christian government and discipline are not *determined* by divine institution, but left for the most part *free* to the prudent disposal of the governors of particular churches; yet there is a *standing form* of government and discipline in the church, instituted by our Saviour himself, which is this, that there should be an *Episcopacy*, or order of men authorized in a *continued succession* from the apostles, (who were authorized by himself,) to *govern* and oversee all those particular churches into which the catholic church should be hereafter distributed, to *ordain* inferior ministers, to teach and instruct and administer the holy offices to particular congregations; and having ordained them, to *guide* and direct them in the discharge of their functions; to *prescribe* the particular rules of outward order and decency, to the people of the respective churches committed to their charge; to *confirm* the weak and admonish the disorderly, and to *correct* the obstinate by excluding them from the communion of the church of Christ. These things therefore, being all of divine institution, are the essentials of christian government and discipline, in which all christian churches are obliged to communicate with each other. And this being the *standing government and discipline* of the catholic church, no particular church can refuse to communicate with it, without dividing itself from the communion of the catholic church; I say refuse to communicate, because it is possible for a church to be without this government and discipline, which yet neither *refuses* it, nor the communion of any church for the sake of it. A church may be debarred of it by unavoidable *necessities* against its consent, and under this circumstance, I can by no means think such a church to be separated from the church catholic; it is indeed an *imperfect* and defective part of the catholic church.* Yet it is a plain case, that if it *rejects* the episcopacy, and separates from the communion of it, it thereby wholly divides itself from the communion of

* See Bellarmin's fifth note, viz. succession of bishops examined by Dr. Thorp; Preserv. against popery, Tit. III. 98. The *Preservative against popery* contains a collection of the best treatises against popery written in the reign of King James II. and collected into 3 vols. folio, by bishop Gibson in 1738. "It is an excellent collection, says Mr. Le Mesurier, and ought to be in every protestant clergyman's library." Bampton. lect. 1808. p. 215.

the catholic church. "Whoever, says dean Sherlock, separates from episcopacy, as an unlawful communion, is a schismatic from the catholic church." This is so plain that there needs no proof of it. For whether episcopacy be of divine institution or not, this is matter of fact granted on all hands, that for 1400 Years at least, *all* those churches into which the catholic church has been distributed, have been subject to the episcopal government, and therefore they who now separate from it, as such, must in so doing, separate from the communion of *all* churches for 1400 years together, and then either all those churches must be out of communion of the catholic church, and consequently during all that time there must be no such thing as a visible catholic church upon earth; or else, those communities of christians which separate from all those churches, must be schisms and separations from the catholic church.

It has now been proved that the catholic church is the one universal society of all christian people, and that the *notes*,* by which it is distinguished from all other societies in the world, are, that the churches into which it is distributed, should hold communion with each other in all the essentials of *Faith, Worship, and Government*. Now, as the episcopal government is rejected by many who agree with us in the essentials of *faith* and *worship*, it is incumbent on such, either to prove the divine institution of their schemes of church government, or, if they cannot, to unite in communion with the church of Ireland, unless they can prove that the terms of lay communion with us, are absolutely sinful, and such as, if complied with, would endanger their salvation.

For where there are two churches, which are not members of each other, there is a schism, though they agree in all the articles of faith, and essentials of worship. For thus the Novatians and Donatists did, who yet were schismatics from the catholic church. And it is very evident the episcopal churches of these countries, and those churches set up in opposition to them, are not members of each other, but are formed into distinct bodies, under different governors, who have

* These three, and *none others*, are the notes of the catholic church. See Dr. Sherlock's discourse on the notes, with reflection on Bellarmine's fifteen notes, and defence of ditto against a Preservative against popery Tit. 3. Grascome's answer to Huddleston's plain way, &c. 1703. p. 64. to 80.

no communion with each other.—I shall now briefly prove that episcopacy is the true form of government instituted by our Saviour.

CHAP. II.

The three distinct orders of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, proved from the scriptures.

I confess indeed that the orders which we *now* call bishops, priests, and deacons, are not distinguished in scripture by these *names*. The orders themselves are plainly distinguished in scripture, but each name is not particularly and constantly applied to a distinct order. For those whom we *now* call bishops, were then distinguished by the name of apostles, and the names of bishops and presbyter, are there promiscuously used for that order, which we now call presbyter or priest. “It is not to be wondered, (says king Charles I. in his second answer to the presbyterian ministers,) if it should happen that in the new testament, the word episcopus or bishop, is usually applied unto presbyters, who were indeed overseers of the flock, rather than unto church governors, who had then a title of greater eminency, viz. apostles. But when the government of churches came into the hands of their successors, the names were by common usage very soon appropriated, that of bishop to the governor or bishop of a diocese, that of presbyter to the ordinary minister or priest.” This is a distinction I would desire the reader carefully to observe, because upon the community of the names bishop and presbyter in scripture, depend most of the arguments of presbyterians. But it is not the distinction of *names*, but of the *office* which we contend for. I shall therefore briefly prove from scripture, that there were three orders instituted by Christ, and his apostles; and then show from ancient authors that the names, *bishops priests and deacons*, have been, from the apostles times, appropriated to these orders.*

* See Dr. Brett's church government, 2d edition 1710, and

We read, Matt. 5. 3, 5, 6. that John the baptist had a great multitude of disciples. But Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John. "And of them he chose twelve whom he named apostles, and sent them to preach the kingdom of God," Luke 6. 13. After these "the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place whither he himself would come." Luke 10. 1. So that during our Saviour's life here on earth, he had three orders of ministers in his Church: first, Christ himself, "the great shepherd and bishop of souls," "an high priest called of God;" then the twelve apostles, and after them the seventy disciples, who are so distinguished from one another, that it implies a distinction in their office; they are mentioned apart by different names, and sent forth at different times. In which establishment, our Saviour kept as near as was possible, to the form in use among the Jews who had their high priest, priests and levites. And that the apostles were superior to the seventy, is also evident, not only from our Saviour's particular care and intercession for the twelve, and his diligent instructing them more than the rest of his followers; but from hence also, that the successors of the apostles were chosen out of the seventy. To what purpose was Matthias chosen in the place of Judas, if by that choice he could receive no more power than he had in his former *commission*? Which proves that the apostles were superior to the seventy, otherwise it had been no advancement to the seventy, to have succeeded them.

Whilst our Saviour lived on earth, he governed his church personally; and although the apostles were superior to the seventy, and had authority "to preach," Matt. 10. 7. and "baptize," John. 4. 2. yet they had no authority to commission or send others to do the same. For as Christ alone had authority to send them, so he alone had authority to send other seventy also. And

his divine right of Episcopacy, 1718. Bishop Potter on Church government, 2d. edition, 1711. Bishop Skinner's Primitive Order, 1803. Brief account of Church Government, (with remarks on Jus. div. Min. Evang. Blondel's Apologia, and Stillingfleet's irenicum;) 2d. edition, 1685, a book strongly recommended by bishop Hoadly, in his defence of Episcopal ordination. But particularly, consult Drury's answer to Boyse, and vindication of ditto, 1709, and his divine right of episcopacy, an answer to Boyse's clear account of episcopacy, Dublin, 714.

this he lets them know at the time of his sending them forth : " the harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few. Pray ye, therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." Matt. 9. 37. Now these words being spoken both to the twelve and to the seventy at the very time when he gave them their commission to preach, was a plain intimation to them, that if they found more assistance necessary, they should not take upon them to commission others, but desire him who was the Lord of the harvest to send more labourers. An evident argument that whosoever has authority to minister the word and sacraments, *has not therefore* authority to *ordain* and commission others to that office ; since Christ, when he gave his apostles a commission to do the one, so plainly restrained them from performing the other, and required them to apply to himself on that occasion, as to the lord of the harvest. Thus we have plainly found three orders of ministers of the christian church, whilst Christ was upon earth ; first, Christ himself, the head or bishop, then the twelve apostles answering to the priests or second order, and lastly, the seventy disciples, answering to the deacons. But then it is to be observed, that when our Saviour settled this œconomy in his church, he had confined it to the Jewish nation ; for when he sent his disciples forth to preach, he charged them, saying, " go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into the city of the Samaritans enter ye not, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," Matt. 10. 5. And being raised up by God to be " a prophet like unto Moses," Deut. 18. 15.—Acts 7. 37. he thought proper, whilst he saw it convenient to have his church confined to the Jewish country, to adhere strictly to the Mosaical œconomy in the government of it ; and therefore as Moses had under him, " twelve princes, heads of the tribes, and seventy elders," Numb. 1. 4.—11. 16. to whom God imparted of Moses spirit, that they might help to rule the people under him ; so Christ also chose twelve apostles and seventy disciples. And therefore, after the resurrection, the apostles being commanded not to depart from Jerusalem for some time, did by divine direction, fill up the number to twelve again, when a vacancy was occasioned by the death of Judas ; that so long as the church was confined to Judea, they might preserve an œconomy.

exactly parallel to that settled by Moses, even so far as to confine themselves to the same number of officers. But when they had begun to enlarge the church beyond the bounds of Judea, though they preserved the sacred œconomy settled by Christ, so as to retain the divers orders of ministers which he first established, yet they had no longer any regard to the numbers twelve and seventy ; for St. Paul and St. Barnabas, and many others were added to the number of the apostles ; and as for the seventy, we hear nothing of them after the resurrection.

However, as I have already intimated, the sacred œconomy of three distinct orders continued in the church, whilst it was under the government of the apostles, as it had done whilst under the immediate government of Christ on earth. For as whilst our blessed Saviour was in his state of humiliation in this world, he was the chief governor of his church, under him the twelve apostles, and below them seventy disciples ; and he himself executed the whole legislative power and episcopal authority in his person, and gave no power to any to *ordain*, or *send* others, till after his resurrection ; so, a short time before he ascended into Heaven, he enlarged the commission of the apostles, and gave *them* authority to rule and govern his church in his stead, and to ordain and send others as he had sent them, for a perpetual succession to the end of the world ; “As my father hath sent me, says he, so send I you,” John 20. 21. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, saying, “receive ye the Holy Ghost :” and after they had received it in a visible manner, on the day of Pentecost, they began to govern the church, by those rules they had received from Christ. It was *now*, and not before, that they offered to ordain others, according to their second commission from their master, and that, with reference both to presbyters and deacons. Thus they ordained deacons to take care of the widows and the poor “in the daily administration,” Acts 6. But they ordained them not for that purpose only, but also to preach and baptize. For Philip, who was one of the deacons, Acts 8. 5. went to preach at Samaria, where he made many converts, and baptized them, but had no authority to lay hands either to confirm those whom he had baptized, or to ordain ministers among them ; wherefore he informed the apostles of what he had done, who sent Peter and John two of their own order, to perform those things which Philip

had no authority to do. The apostles ordained also presbyters (or elders) in every city, Acts 14. 23. These elders or presbyters are also called bishops, for so St. Paul called the presbyters of Ephesus, when he sent for them to attend his Episcopal or Apostolic visitation to Miletus, saying, "take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you (bishops or) overseers," Acts 20. 28. Thus after the resurrection as well as before, we find three orders of ministers in the church, first, the apostles, who were chief governors; next the presbyters, (then called bishops); and lastly the deacons.

The apostles, therefore, were the first bishops, (as the word is now used) of the christian church, and governed it under our Saviour, who gave them their commission for that purpose. But, although the authority given them by our Lord was in common to them all, so that they were, every one of them, bishops and governors of the whole Catholic Church, and might exercise their episcopal power in any part of it, yet they soon found it necessary to limit the universality of their power as to the executive part of it, that one might not interfere with another; and this no doubt they did by the direction of the holy Spirit, who is, "the God of order, not of confusion, in all the churches of the Saints." The first division we find made by them, is mentioned by St. Paul, who says that some of the apostles were appointed by an agreement between themselves, (and not by any command of St. Peter) to take charge of the Gentiles, and others of the Jews, Gal. 2. 9. And having thus ordered by mutual agreement, that James, Cephas or Peter, and John should take care of the Jewish Christians, and Paul and Barnabas of the Gentile christians, they then proceeded to make a further limitation, and gave to each apostle his particular district or diocese.

Thus they appointed St. JAMES, the BISHOP OF JERUSALEM; and whether he was one of the twelve or not, this is beyond dispute, that he was by compact and agreement, fixed at Jerusalem, to exercise his episcopal and apostolical authority in that city, and the country adjoining. And this is evident from St. Paul, Gal. 1. 18, 19. who three years after his conversion went up to Jerusalem, and found St. James resident there, for that place was his charge; and St. Jerom (in Gal. 1.)

assures he was bishop of Jerusalem. St. Paul, fourteen years after his conversion went again to Jerusalem, and found St. James upon his charge, Gal. 2. 1. and I do not find that ever he removed from thence. In the Synod which was held at Jerusalem, about the question whether the converts from gentilism should be circumcised, Peter delivers his judgment, as one who was a member of the assembly; but James speaks with authority, and his sentence is decisive, and according to his determination the decree was enacted. And some of the Church of Jerusalem, who came to Antioch, are said to be certain who came from James; which implies that James was head of that Church. So when St. Paul arrived at Jerusalem "he went in unto James," as the bishop, "and all the presbyters," who were next in authority to him, "were present," Acts 21. 18. Why does St. James direct his Epistle "to the twelve tribes scattered abroad," but because he looked upon all the Jewish Christians, who still thought it their duty to come to Jerusalem to worship, to be under his care. Upon this account, all the writers of the first ages, unanimously (says Blondel, Apolog. p. 50.) style him bishop of Jerusalem.

It is objected by some, (not to the credit of Christianity,) that the church of Jerusalem was confined to a single congregation. But it is utterly impossible that the many thousands from time to time converted in Jerusalem alone, and the daily encrease of them*, could worship God in one and the same place together. Hence the necessity of their being divided into *many congregations*, though still but *the one church* of Jerusalem, "a persecution being raised against the church."

It may be observed in this place, that where the Scriptures speak of the churches of a province, the plural number is used, as the churches of Judea, Samaria, Syria, Cilicia, &c. But where they speak of a city, they use the singular number, as the church of Jerusalem, Corinth, &c. And it is evident that there were many presbyters and congregations in one city, as has been proved by Dr. Maurice in his treatise of Diocesan Episcopacy, in answer to Clarkson, 1691, and his vindication.

* Acts 1. 15.—Acts 2. 41, 47.—Acts 4. 4.—Acts 5. 14, and 6. 7. See Maurice against Clarkson, p. 9. 3d. edition, 1717.

cation of the primitive church against Baxter, 1682 ;*
 “ from which books, says the learned Dr. Brett, any that desires it, may receive full satisfaction on this subject, i. e. whether the ancient bishoprick’s were only single and independent congregations. For he has most learnedly and clearly refuted all the citations of his adversaries, and plainly shown how they have falsely represented a multitude of testimonies of ancient writers, to countenance their dream of congregational episcopacy : and that they have shamefully perverted the author’s sense, some times leaving out, or putting in a word, to make a passage serve their purposes.”

As St. James had Jerusalem and the adjacent country, for his diocese, so the other apostles (though each had a *general* authority in, and concern for the whole church) had certain places for their districts also, and exercised a *particular* authority over the churches which they had planted. Thus, St. PETER had the care of the Jewish christians, whom he calls the strangers scattered through Pontus, Galatia, &c. and JAMES, PETER and JOHN, of the Gentile christians. The apostle BARNABAS seems, upon his separation from St. Paul, to have settled himself in Cyprus his native country, Acts 15. 39.—41. 36. St. PAUL had the particular care of many churches which he founded, and was their proper bishop himself, till he saw fit to commit the care of some of them to others. That he exercised this power over presbyters is manifest from his sending for the presbyters of Ephesus, to come to him at Miletus, Acts 20. 17. and giving them a charge to perform their duties faithfully, as our bishops do in their visitations. And in another place, Acts 15. 36. he visits the churches wherein he had ordained presbyters before ; “ let us return,” says he to Barnabas, “ and visit our brethren in all cities, where we preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do.” And again, “ besides those things which are

* See also, Dr. Sherlock’s confutation of Owen’s origin of churches, in defence of Stillingfleet, from page 297 to 421 ; and Sleater’s original draught, &c. in answer to Sir Peter King’s enquiry ; 3d. edition, Dublin, 1723. The “ Enquiry ” has met with great approbation from Dr. M’Dowel in his late pamphlet on presbyterianism ; but surely Dr. M’Dowel has never seen Mr. Sleater’s learned answer to it, which, it is well known, convinced Sir Peter of his errors.

without; that which cometh upon me daily; the care of all the churches," and that he judged himself to have no spiritual superior or equal in spiritual matters, within his own district, "the measure of the rule which God had given to him," 2 Cor. 10. 13. is no less manifest from what he writes to the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 4. 15. where he says, "though ye have 10,000 instructors in Christ, yet ye have not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you, through the gospel. Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me," Cor. 9. 1. "and am I not an apostle? if I am not so to others, yet doubtless I am to you." 1 Cor. 4. 19.

Thus for some time this episcopal authority was exercised by the apostles themselves, but because the number of the faithful daily increased, and least the church should be destitute of this authority at their deaths, they invested others with this power, that they might ordain presbyters, and govern the congregations committed to their charge.

That *the apostolic office* was intended by Christ, *not for a temporal but a perpetual institution*, is evident from the commission given to them by our Saviour after his resurrection. For having singled the eleven apostles, "out of above 50, to whom he appeared after his resurrection, he spake to them, saying, all power is given to me in heaven and earth; go ye therefore, and disciple all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you *always*, even unto the end of the world, Amen." In which words he plainly shows that their office was intended to be continued, even unto the end of the world, and he confirms this promise with *Amen*, testifying that he would verily and indeed fulfil it. And that the promise was made to the office or order with which he had invested them, and not to their persons, is evident, because otherwise his promise must have failed at their deaths, and consequently he was so far from continuing with them to the end of the world, in the discharge of this office, that he did not continue with them an hundred years, for these eleven apostles were dead in less than that time. Therefore, this promise must necessarily extend to others, who should succeed them in

this office, and consequently implies a power in them, to elect and set apart others to the discharge of the office, and those, others in a continued succession.

For our better understanding this, we must consider what it is properly to be an apostle of Christ, or wherein the office purely apostolic, consisted. For we must know, that those whom the scriptures call apostles, had many *extraordinary* privileges granted to them, as, an immediate call and ordination by Christ himself, infallibility, tongues and a power of working miracles, &c. which were designed only for the first plantation and propagation of the gospel. Now these are what our bishops never pretended to, for they were extraordinary gifts and privileges, and not necessary for the perpetual government of the church of Christ, but were transient and temporary; so neither did they peculiarly belong to the apostolic office, because these qualifications were possessed by *other* ministers of the church, who were not apostles, (see 1 Cor. 12 & 13 Chapters.) Besides these could not possibly be esteemed any parts of the apostolic office, being only extraordinary gifts bestowed on them, the better to enable them to perform that office.*

But there are other things which are *ordinary* and *essential to the apostolic office*, without which they could not have been apostles, and which are necessary to the government of Christ's church till his second coming. This is the power which I affirm to be *permanent* and *perpetual*: by this the apostles were distinguished from all subordinate officers in the christian church. Now therefore, that which particularly distinguished the apostles from all other subordinate officers, and which was the true characteristic of an apostle, was the *supreme spiritual power and authority*, and a power of *ordaining*, i. e. of *transmitting this authority unto others*, according to the commandment of our Saviour. These powers were not to be temporary, for he promised his apostles, to "be with them to the end of the world." And therefore to make the apostolic office temporary, is to defeat our Saviour's promise, which could not be accomplished, if those offices had not remained in the church, without which it could

* Dr. Barrow's mistakes (in his Supremacy, p. 93,) on this head, (which some late writers have fallen into,) are ably rectified by Drury against Boyse.

neither *be* nor *continus*. Whatever belonged to them as apostles, or officers of Christ's church, was to be derived from them to other officers of the church for ever ; unless we can suppose that men may be christians without having the seal of christianity ; that men may become priests and ambassadors for God, without being sent by such men as he gave power and commission to.

But before I proceed, I must remind the reader, that the extent of a diocese is not essential to a bishoprick ; and when I say that the bishops succeed the apostles, I do not mean that it is necessary that they should succeed to this or that particular district, but in their power and jurisdiction. When therefore, presbyterians, upon all occasions make so much noise about *diocesan bishops*, and *diocesan churches*, it is only to darken the cause ; for the question is not about a diocese, but whether the apostles left *the plenitude of their ecclesiastical power* to some single persons, who were called apostles, afterwards bishops, or whether they gave it in commission to every presbyter. If they left it to some single persons, as it is evident they did, it signifies nothing to the question in debate, whether they exercised that power in a *large diocese*, or in a single congregation, for this is wholly owing to compact and agreement ;* which gives a very easy and natural resolution of that question, why St. Paul besought Timothy to abide at Ephesus, 1 Tim. 1. 3. ? because as he was a bishop of the church of Christ, the exercise of that power could not be limited to Ephesus, or any other particular district, unless he had agreed to it himself ; and therefore St. Paul did not *command*, but *beseech* him to abide at Ephesus, and exercise his apostolic jurisdiction and power there.

It has already been intimated, that as the apostles by the plenitude of their ecclesiastical power were superior to other Presbyters whom they ordained, so they chose out some of those presbyters, to whom they communicated all the branches of the pastoral office, who might supply their places when they were gone, and be superior in power to other presbyters. And this argument that the apostolic office was *really succeeded in*, entirely overthrows the conceit of its being personal and

* Cracanthorp, Def. Eccl : Anglic. p. 175. Lond. 1625.

temporary ; and this I shall prove by several instances from scripture ; and first, the instances of Matthias and Barnabas. As for MATTHIAS, his apostleship is recorded in Acts 1. where we read, that immediately after our Saviour's ascension, the apostles and disciples met together to elect one into the office of the apostle Judas. The necessity of this is urged with great earnestness by Peter, who tells them it could not be neglected, *δει* *it must be done* ; and for this reason, he calls it *κληρον της διακονιας και Αποστολης*, " part of the ministry and the apostleship," i. e. such a part of the churches patrimony as was not to be alienated, or suffered to go to decay ; and likewise mentions, that " it is written in the book of psalms, let his habitation be desolate, and his *bishopric* let another take." From all this it is evident, that the apostolic office was not personal, for then Judas who was one of them, could have had no successor. And since Matthias did *succeed* Judas in his apostleship, it is no absurdity to say that the rest of the apostles may be succeeded, as well as Judas. The apostleship of BARNABAS, who was one of the seventy, is also evident, for he had a formal ordination to the apostolic office, at the same time that St. Paul was ordained ; they were both separated to the same work, by imposition of hands, and by prayer, Acts 13. 2, 3. And they are both called apostles, Acts 14. 14. And to confirm this, he is constantly employed in the same apostolic works with St. Paul ; " for they ordained presbyters," Acts 14. 23. See also 1 Cor. 9. 4, 5, 6. Hence it is evident that St. Barnabas was really an apostle as well as St. Paul or St. Matthias ; and therefore the apostolic office was not limited to those twelve, whom our Saviour named, but that it might be succeeded in, and others might be added to it, as there was occasion.

There are also several other examples in scripture, of men succeeding in the apostolic order. Beside Epaphroditus, whom St. Paul calls the " Apostle," Phil. 2. 25. and the ancient fathers affirm to have been bishop of the Philippians ; and others, whom St. Paul calls apostles, and the ancient fathers do for that reason speak of as bishops of the churches, 2 Cor. 8. 23. we have a remarkable example in TIMOTHY, who was BISHOP, or chief governor of the church of Ephesus, planted by St. Paul. The authority which Timothy exercised in

this Church, was not conferred on him by any agreement or vote of the *people*, but by the imposition of St. Paul's hands, 2 Tim. 1. 6.—1 Tim. 4. 14. By virtue of this authority he ruled the whole church of Ephesus, presbyters, as well as private christians, in the same manner as the apostles used to do. For he was empowered, not only to "command and teach" the laity, but also to exercise jurisdiction over the presbyters; to "receive accusations, not only against private christians, but even against presbyters;" though in the latter case, he was to proceed with more caution; against "a presbyter, receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses;" to "commit the doctrine of the gospel to faithful men, who should be able to teach others," and to "ordain some of those whom he found qualified to be "bishops and deacons," and "to lay hands suddenly on no man," &c. see the Epistles to Timothy. Here is an entire account of almost all the parts of the apostolic authority, as it was to be exercised by Timothy, whom the ancient fathers constantly call the bishop of Ephesus; and the bishops of that See are called his successors; and twenty-seven of them are said to be derived from him in a continued line of succession, at the celebration of the great council of Chalcedon. See bishop Potter on church government, p. 143.

The same authority which Timothy had at Ephesus, was exercised in the churches of Crete by Titus, whence he is declared by the concurrent testimony of all antiquity to be the first BISHOP OF CRETE; so Eusebius (Lib. 3. c. 4.) affirms that he (των ἐν τῇ Κρήτῃ ἐκκλησιῶν ἐπισκοπὴν ἐλάμβανει,) received episcopal authority over the churches of Crete. He was ordained and appointed to this office, not by the people's choice, but by St. Paul. And by him, he was empowered "to teach all degrees of men, and to exhort, and rebuke with authority, to take cognizance of heretics, and to reject from communion, such of them as did not repent upon the second admonition; to set in order whatever St. Paul had left wanting; lastly, to ordain presbyters in every city."

Now if presbyters might have ordained others of their own order, I can see no reason why these two apostolic men were left by St. Paul, the one at Crete, and the other at Ephesus, for that purpose: for it is

most certain, that there were presbyters at Ephesus before Timothy was left there, and probably in Crete,* before Titus was settled there, for it was St. Paul's custom to "ordain presbyters in every church," Acts, 14. 23. and if these could have ordained others, as the number of converts increased, it was unnecessary to set any person over them to perform that office. "Suppose," (says Mr. William Law†) "when Timothy was sent to Ephesus to ordain presbyters, the church had told him, We have chosen presbyters already, and laid our hands upon them. Would such a practice have been allowed of in the Ephesians? or would ministers so ordained, have been received as the ministers of Christ?" Had any such authority belonged to the whole body of christians in any church, or to the presbyters, can we think that among so many epistles in the New Testament, sent to several churches, we should not have one word concerning ordination in any of them, but only in the two epistles to Timothy, and in that to Titus? This, I think, is a very reasonable argument.

I shall now consider the arguments against the episcopacy of Timothy and Titus. 1. It is objected that they were evangelists.—As for Titus, there is not in scripture the least pretence for it. And that Timothy had not this power committed to him as an evangelist, is most certain, because evangelists as such, had not such a power: for then deacons might have ordained and governed priests, for such was Philip the evangelist. Yet is certain that he pretended not to any such authority, Acts 21. 8. and 6. 5. But is not Timothy called an evangelist? 2 Tim. 4. 5. I answer, no; for the text does not say *do the office*, but *use the work* of an evangelist, which no more makes him a mere evangelist, than the words following, make him a mere deacon, for he is commanded "to fulfil his deaconship:" But he might be both bishop, evangelist and deacon. What this work of an evangelist was, may be seen in the second verse of this chapter, "preach the word, be instant in season, out of season,

* But if there were no church ministers of any denomination at that time settled in Crete, then it is evident Titus must have ordained in that island, without any presbytery to assist him in it. Sleater's original Draught, 191.

† Second letter to the bishop of Bangor, p. 97, tenth edition, Dub. 1757.

reprove, rebuke," &c.* All which every bishop is obliged to perform ; so that this can be no proof that Timothy was an evangelist, and that his office was temporary ; and there is not a single duty which Timothy was obliged to perform, as a minister of Christ, which was temporary. 2. Their occasional attendance on St. Paul in his travels, can be no objection to their episcopacy.—For granting that they did not continually reside, yet, it is evident that they were invested with episcopal power, with a right to ordain, and to exercise those acts of government in the churches to which they were sent, which presbyters have no right to exercise, and which bishops now justly challenge as appropriated to their order : “ for as, bishop Hoadly remarks, it is to the office of Timothy, (whether fixed at Ephesus during life, or not,) that the episcopal function for which we contend, answers. For it is not essential to a bishop, that he should be fixed at one place during life : but that he manage the affair of ordination and government over whatsoever church he is placed, and for whatsoever length of time.” And if we will give credit to antiquity, they certainly did return to Ephesus and Crete, and died there, as the reader will find sufficiently proved by Dr. Cave, in his Lives of the fathers.

Timothy and Titus then, had that authority in the church, which our bishops now challenge : wherefore, St. Paul writing to the Philippians, joins Timothy with himself, as a person of the same order and degree, “ Paul and Timotheus the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons.” Phil. 1. 1. In this verse we have

* In this place we may consider the text Eph. 4. 11. But it is plain that the offices mentioned in this text, were only several denominations conferred on those officers which were in the church before, with relation to their labours in several parts and places of the catholic church ; and were all included in the names *apostles* and *elders*, as appears when all the different degrees of officers of the church were convened at Jerusalem, they were all comprised in these two, apostles and elders. And indeed, they were only occasional commissions to execute some branches of the apostolic offices, which could not be executed, as things then stood, without an *extraordinary power* ; and whenever God sees such to be necessary, he may grant the like commissions again. Drury's second Answer, 102, and third, 150.

these three orders, Paul and Timothy of the first order that is, the order of bishops, as they are *now* called; the second order which is now called priests or presbyters, being then also *called* bishops, as has been observed; those whom we now call bishops, being then styled apostles or angels: so says Theodoret* expressly, "the same persons were anciently called promiscuously both bishops and presbyters, whilst those who are now called bishops, were styled apostles. But shortly after, the name of apostles was appropriated to such only as were apostles indeed: and then the name of bishop was given to those who before were called apostles." Thus, he says, "Epaphroditus was the apostle of the Philippians, and Titus the apostle of the Cretians, and Timothy the apostle of the Asiatics." And this he repeats in several other places†. So Clemens bishop of Rome, is by Clemens Alexandrinus, called "Clemens the apostle." And Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, is called by St. Chrysostom, "apostle and bishop‡." And as the bishops were styled apostles by St. Paul, so are they called angels by St. John: which is another Greek word signifying a messenger: for it is evident that the ANGELS of the SEVEN CHURCHES were the bishops of those churches: their office being plainly such as we now call episcopal, and the same which is exercised by our present bishops. Episcopal power is intimated in the rebuke given to the angel of the church of Thyatira, Rev. 2. 26. who is reprov'd for permitting a false prophetess to seduce the people. Which surely would not have been, unless this angel had the power and authority of a bishop, to cast such a person out of the church. The same power is also intimated to be in the angel of the church of Pergamus, 2. 14. since he is also rebuked for having in his church, those that held the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. And the angel of Ephesus, 2. 2. is particularly commended for examining those who pretended to be apostles, and to have authority to preach without a commission. Which commendation plainly denotes a supreme power of trial and conviction. And that they held this episcopal office not for a limited time, as mere chair-

* Com. in 1. Tit. 3. 1.

† Com. in Phil. 1. 1. in Phil. Com. 2. 25.

‡ See Bishop Bilson's Perpetual Government of Christ's Church, 226. 227.

men of the presbytery, but for their whole life, is plain from what is said to the angel of the Church of Smyrna, "be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life," Rev. 2. 10. which surely must be meant of being faithful in his office, since he is here spoken to not as a private man, but as an angel or bishop of the church; and if his office was not for life, then this precept had been vain. It will be hard likewise, says Hoadley, to show, how a prime presbyter, being only chosen chairman or president of the college of presbyters, for the more orderly management of their joint counsels, should become chargeable with the faults of *other churches*, with which, according to this supposition, he had nothing to do. For it is manifest, he could be no more accountable for any *congregation* but his own, than any of the other *presbyters*, had he not the care of *others* committed to him in some peculiar manner. And this he could not have, if he were only chairman in the college.—It cannot with any show of reason be alleged, that these angels were but simple presbyters or parish priests in their several churches; for such eminent cities as these seven, could not be supplied by a single presbyter. Nay, it is certain that in Ephesus, there were several presbyters whom St. Paul sent for to attend him at Miletus, and consequently the angel of Ephesus cannot signify the presbyter of that church, because, the angel was but one, and the presbyters were many. The angels are every where spoken to in the singular number, as to single persons, except where there is an apparent apostrophe to the churches. This apostrophe is very plain in all those places where the plural number is used; but in that to the church of Thyatira, there seems to be a plurality of persons spoken to, before the apostrophe to the church. 2. 4. "But unto you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira." To this we answer, that in the ancient Greek MSS. particularly in that at St. James's, the *and*, is left out, and then the apostrophe is very plain here also, "to you, I say, the rest in Thyatira." So that, says bishop Potter, the angels of the seven churches having appeared to be single persons, invested with chief authority, we need not scruple to call them, with St. Austin in one of his homilies on the Revelation, and other ancient fathers, (*episcopos, sive præpositos ecclesiarum*,) the bishops, or presidents of the churches.

But although during the first century, the name of apostle or angel was generally applied to those persons who were of the first order in the church, and the second order was indifferently styled either bishops or presbyters, yet immediately afterwards these two names became distinguished; the succeeding governors of the church humbly abstaining from the name apostles, because they were not (*αποστολοι*) *sent* so immediately from Christ, were contented to be called bishops. This is the very reason given by *Ambrose in his comment, on epist. to Timothy, “the blessed apostles, says he, deceasing, those that were ordained to *preside* over churches after them, could not be equalled to those first, nor attain the like gift of miracles, but appearing inferiour to them in many other things, thought it not *decent* to challenge to themselves the name of apostles; and hereupon they divided the names, and left them, (i. e. the inferiour order) the name of presbyters, and the others, (i. e. those who presided) were styled bishops: and these were endued with the *power of ordaining*, that they might know themselves to be set over the churches in the *fullest right*.” So that soon after the death of John (the last survivor of the twelve apostles,) we find the three orders distinguished by the names of bishops, priests, and deacons, as they are at this day. And the title of bishop was thenceforth appropriated to those who had the power of ORDINATION, CONFIRMATION, and GOVERNMENT.

This I shall briefly prove by some few instances, from the fathers who lived before the council of Nice, A. D. 325. I say some *few* instances, because if I should collect all the numerous instances, which may be produced to this purpose, from the fathers of the three first centuries only, I might write a volume upon this one head.

* Vide Salmas. de Primatu, 40.

CHAP. III.

*The three distinct orders of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons proved from the Fathers of the first three hundred years after Christ.**

The first testimony I shall produce from the fathers, shall be taken from St. IGNATIUS, BISHOP OF ANTIOCH, who was thrown to wild beasts, by order of the emperor Trajan, A. D. 107 ; which was only four years after the death of John the apostle. In the beginning of his epistle to the Magnesians, he speaks of Damas their bishop, of Bassus and Apollonius their presbyters, and of Sotion their deacon. To the Philadelphians he writes, "let the deacons obey the priests, and both priests and deacons the bishop, the bishop, Christ, as Christ obeys the father." "Do nothing without the bishop, keep your bodies as the temple of God ; love unity, flee divisions ; be followers of Jesus Christ, as he is of the father." There are many other passages in the epistles of this glorious saint and martyr, to the same purpose, wherein he distinguishes bishops from presbyters. And as for the cavils made against the genuineness of his epistles, or some passages in them, they are all most satisfactorily answered, and the honour of this holy martyr vindicated by Vossius, archbishop Usher, Dr. Pearson bishop of Chester, and Cotelierius.

CLEMENS ROMANUS, (mentioned by St Paul, Phil. 4. 3.) in his genuine epistle to the Corinthians, written long before the death of the apostle St. John, very clearly distinguishes the *governors* and the *presbyters*. And

* On this head, consult bishop Potter on church government, 154. Brett's divine right, &c. against Withers p. 27. Bishop Taylor's episcopacy asserted. Brokesby's primitive church, 1712. Maurice's vindication of primitive church, against Baxter's history of bishops treat. of episcopacy, &c. 1682. Bishop Parker on church government, and Burscough on ditto, 1692. Bingham's antiquities, book II. 6. 1 and 3. But above all, Drury's answers to Boyse.

informing us that our Lord appointed the persons who should minister to him in holy things, he proceeds in a clear and strong allusion from the Jewish to the christian priesthood, to name three orders, and after them the laity: "to the high priest, proper offices are committed, to the priests their proper place is assigned, the levites (or deacons) have their proper ministries, and a layman is bound to laical performances. Let every one of you, brethren, in his proper station, give thanks to God, living conscientiously, and not transgressing the prescribed rule of his service or ministry." Section 40. 41. edit. per Cleric. Antw. 1698.

ST. IRENÆUS, bishop of Lyons, A. D. 167, says "We can enumerate those who were instituted bishops in the several churches by the apostles, even to ourselves." Lib. 3. cap. 3. edit. Oxon. p. 200. And "that the apostolic state of the church is known through all the world, to be by the succession of bishops, to whom the apostles gave power to rule and govern the church." p. 360. The objections against this father, are sufficiently answered in Drury against Boyse, second answer p. 75. and third answer p. 136.

ST. CYPRIAN bishop of Carthage A. D. 250. writing to Cornelius bishop of Rome, says, "this, brother, is and ought to be our principal labour and study, even as much as we are able, to take care that unity may still obtain, which was delivered by our Lord and by his apostles, to us (bishops) their successors." And as he thus speaks of bishops as successors of the apostles, so he also shows that they are superiour to presbyters, and particularly where he says, "How great reason have we to be afraid of the wrath of God, when some presbyters, neither mindful of the gospel, nor of their own station, nor thinking on the future judgment of God, nor considering that they have a bishop now their governor, dare to assume all to themselves, to the contempt of their governor, a thing never before attempted under any of my predecessors." Ep. 16. edit. Oxon. But whoever desires to see the judgment of St. Cyprian explained in the fullest extent, let him consult a book called, *The principles of the Cyprianic age, and the vindication of it*, written by Mr. John Sage, a Scotch bishop.

CORNELIUS in his epistle to Fabius bishop of Antioch, affirms that in his church of Rome, there were

forty-six presbyters, and seven deacons. Euseb. lib. 6. cap. 43.

ST. JEROM who lived 378, writes thus, "what Aaron and his sons, and the levites did in the temple, this the bishops, priests, and deacons, claim to themselves in the church; that we may know that the apostolic traditions were taken from the old testament." And "that the safety of the church depends on the dignity of the chief priests, to whom if a greater and more eminent power was not given, there would be as many schisms as priests." Ep. ad. Evagrium. See Hammond's dissert. contra Blondel, and vind.

From the testimonies of particular persons, I proceed to the testimonies of whole churches. The APOSTOLIC CANONS were made by several councils in the three first centuries. The first canon is this; "Let a bishop be ordained by two or three bishops," the second, "Let a presbyter or deacon be ordained by one bishop." Fifth, "that a bishop, presbyter or deacon must not put away his wife, under pretence of religion." Thirty-ninth, "Let neither presbyters, nor deacons, perform any thing without the bishops allowance." COUNCIL of LAODICEÆ, A. D. 321. "That no clergyman ought to travel, without the consent of his bishop."

I might soon fill a large volume with citations from the fathers and councils within the first four centuries, for we have scarce any writings of antiquity which do not distinguish the three distinct orders of bishops priests and deacons.

CHAP. IV.

*Ordination always appropriated to the Bishops office.—
Objections against episcopacy, answered.*

IT has already been proved, that there are distinct offices in the church; it follows then, that there must be

Bishop Potter on Church government, 214. Leslie on the qualifications necessary for administering the sacraments; reprinted in the Scholar armed, vol. 1. 1795.

distinct *powers* appropriated to every one of them. And therefore, though the scriptures had been silent in this matter, we might have safely concluded from the different kinds of officers, whom Christ hath intrusted with the care, and government of his church, not only, that private christians are excluded from the exercise of any ecclesiastical power; but that some powers are appropriated in such a manner to the chief officers, that they cannot be lawfully exercised by those of lower orders. And that private christians have no power to dispense the ordinances of the gospel to others, but must expect them from the hands of Gods ministers, is evident from the church officers being described by our Lord himself, to be Gods "stewards," who are entrusted with the care of his "household," i. e. his church; and whose business it is to dispense their constant food, i. e. the word and sacraments, to all the members of it.*

We are told in express terms, "that no man taketh this honour," of being an officer in Gods church "to himself," but he, "who is called" and commissioned by God, "as was Aaron," Heb. 5. 4. Nay, that even our Lord, who was both God and man, "glorified not himself to be made an high priest, but he, who said unto him, thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee," v. 5. Accordingly, we find that he assumed no part of that office, which he came into the world to execute, till after that outward commission given to him by a voice from heaven at his baptism, Matt. 3. 17; for it is written, Matt. 4. 17. "From that time Jesus began to preach." Neither did he reckon it sufficient to instruct the apostles, by preaching to them, and afterwards by sending upon them the Holy Spirit; but besides this, he solemnly *called* and *set them apart*, and invested them with a peculiar authority, before they presumed to undertake their office. And we find that St. Paul often insists on this mission from Christ, and demands attention and obedience, on that account, Rom. 1. 1.—1 Cor. 1. 9.—1 Gal. 1. 15, 16.

It may be farther observed, that the *gifts* or abilities of church officers are every where throughout the new testament, distinguished from their *commission*, and described as previous qualifications to it. Not only bishops

* For an answer to the question "what is to be done in cases of necessity?" Consult Drury's second answer, 55.

and presbyters are required to have several qualifications, and to give sufficient proof of them, and after that to wait for a *commission*, before they presume to govern the church, 1 Tim. 3.—Tit. 1. but even the deacons, however endued with natural and spiritual abilities, could not assume their office, till they had been approved and authorized by the apostles, or others invested with apostolic authority. Hence we are told, that the apostles directed the people to “look out seven men, full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom, whom *we* (say they) may appoint, Acts 6. 3. Stephen, one of their number, is said in particular to be “a man full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost;” yet they were not permitted to exercise this least of all church ministries, till the apostles, had ordained them by *prayer and laying on of hands*. Whence it is manifest, that no qualifications whatever are sufficient to empower any man to exercise any office in the church, who has not been first approved and *commissioned* by those, whom God has invested with authority for that end.

This is sufficient to show the folly of the assertion made by certain modern fanatics, “that they have an *inward call* to the work of the ministry,” which in *their* opinion, is the only necessary qualification.* For we have seen by several scripture instances, that the inward call was not alone sufficient; even our Saviour thought it necessary, and probably, for an example to those who were to succeed him in his commission, that the *outward* call and appointment should also be added to his *inward* qualification for it. And in the church as a *visible* society, a *visible* appointment of officers is essential, that the members of the society may know who are the persons appointed to manage the affairs of it. The *inward* call of the Holy Ghost is an *invisible* thing, of which we can form no judgment. It may be least found where it is most pretended to. We know that this has been the case. As the gift, therefore, which qualified the party to try the spirits, is no longer possessed by the church, if no other qualification for the discharge of the ministry, but the pretension of the officiating minister, be required, much mischief may be done in the christian world before

* Daubeny's Guide to the church, vol. 2. 404. Drury's second answer 54, and third answer 104.

the cheat may be discovered ; for in this case there is no drawing a line. If therefore, the *inward* call be admitted in one case, it must be admitted in all, for we cannot discriminate: and therefore, it opens a gate for all impostors to preach the gospel, without any *ordination* and *commission* ; for how easy is it for them to plead, that they have an *inward* call to preach the gospel.

It is objected also, that these self-appointed teachers are true ministers, because " they lead good lives, and their preaching is attended with success." As for the first pretence, we know that Satan himself appears as an angel of light ; that some heretics, quakers, and heathens, have excelled many christians in their virtuous behaviour. Yet surely no considerate christian, would think it safe to make these men their guides. And if the *success* of their ministry, is an argument that God approved their ordination, then all parties in the world will claim it, and the most irregular will plead it, and patronise under it the greatest irregularities imaginable. And this argument holds equally strong for a Jew or a Mahometan, since their admirers and followers are very numerous, and zealous in their own way.—But our Saviour forewarns us, says Dr. Wells,* to "beware of false prophets, which come in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves," Matt. 7, 15. These "ye shall know by their *fruits*:" which cannot be understood of their good or bad lives, because he tells us, they should appear outwardly good: but by their *fruits*, must be meant the effects of their doctrine, which should always tend in the main to some bad purpose. Accordingly these words are very applicable to the discovery of these teachers to be false prophets ; for, although they may make a show of sanctity in their behaviour, yet their doctrine tends in the main, to *foment* and *nourish division* in the church, and not to bring men into the true faith and order of the gospel. To this character may be added that of St. Paul 2 Cor. 11, 13. "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ." And the artifices, whereby these false apostles then seduced the people, were much the same made use of by our modern methodist preachers, &c. namely, the pretence of *better edification*, 2 Cor. 11—verse 3, compared

* Letter to a Dissenter, 34, Dub. 1706, 4th edition.

with Genesis, 3. 5, 6; as also of being *more powerful preachers*, verse 6; and of preaching *freely and without reward*, verse 7 to 12.

But it may be objected, "that all believers are commanded to comfort and edify one another." Certainly, says bishop Reynolds, every private christian in his place and station ought to minister grace to his hearers, and to have his speeches seasoned with salt, and fitted to the use of edifying, yet I assert that the scriptures do not warrant laymen preaching at all in church assemblies, either by recording an instance of it, or exhorting them to perform it. The apostles, says Dr. Bennet, and the seventy were sent forth to preach, and were thereby made God's messengers, and our Saviour vested the apostles, and in them their successors, with a commission to teach all nations, so that the preachers of the gospel act in Christ's stead, and as his ambassadors, 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20. To them he has "committed the ministry and word of reconciliation," and not to all christians in general, ver. 18, and therefore they are distinguished as being "stewards" of God's mysteries." 1 Cor. 4. 1. And I appeal to any considering man, how great a sin it must needs be, for any person that is not sent by God, to take upon himself the office of his ambassador, to act as a steward of his spiritual blessings, to arrogate the dispensation of that which was never committed to him?*

And how displeasing it is to God for any man to assume any office in the church, without his *commission*; we may learn from the example of king Saul; who in the absence of Samuel ventured to offer the burnt offering; and although he intended well, yet the sentence pronounced against him was, that in so doing, "he had done foolishly, he had not kept the commandment of the Lord, therefore his kingdom should not continue," 1 Sam. 13. Uzzah, also, was struck dead for invading the office of the priesthood." 2 Sam. 6. 6.—1 Chron. 13. 9. The popular argument in the mouth of Corah was, that "Aaron took too much upon him; seeing that all the congregation was holy;" the inference from which seems to be, that the people had no need of the ministration of Aaron, but could minister unto themselves. Upon this

* See Bennet's Rights of the clergy, against Tindal's rights, 111.

plea, the offspring of spiritual pride, Corah and his company, took upon them the sacerdotal office, but, "the Lord made a new thing, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and all that appertained to them," Numb. 16. Indeed under the christian economy, they who violate the laws of God, are seldom punished in a visible and miraculous way: but then, says bishop Potter, they are reserved to the future judgment of God, which though it is more distant, and consequently less apt to affect unthinking men, is no less certain, and if duly considered, far more terrible, than any punishment inflicted in this life. And as the offices of the *Christian* church are of divine appointment, as well as those of the *Jewish*; and as much more sacred and honourable than they, as the *substance* is preferable to its own *type* or *shadow*; so they who usurp these offices, though their punishment may not be so sudden, will undoubtedly find themselves in a worse condition in the next life, which is the proper season of punishment for offences against the gospel, than those who invaded the rights of the Jewish priesthood.

It has now been proved, that no man can exercise any ecclesiastical office, who is not lawfully called to it. It now remains to be enquired, from whom this *call* or *commission*, must be expected?

* Now Christ is certainly the fountain and original of all power in his church, and every one who expects any part of that power, must receive it from Christ as he himself has prescribed. Let a man be otherwise ever so well qualified, yet if he do not receive his commission to preach the gospel, from those whom Christ the head has empowered to give such commissions, he must of necessity be an intruder. I confess, the ordainers do not give the *original power*; for that is lodged in, and flows from Christ: but then according to Christ's command, they give them power, i. e. upon trial of their qualifications, they *authorize* them to preach the gospel, &c.† Which

* Drury's third answer, 105.

† "And this too, says Mr. Drury, though the *ordainers* might be mistaken in his qualifications, because the qualifications described, 1 Tim. 3.—Tit. 1. are not necessary to the being of a lawful pastor, but to the *advantageous execution* of his office. I shall endeavour to make this clear by an example: suppose,

they cannot do without such a commission, or without an *extraordinary call*; which I suppose none of our dissenters pretend to.

As for the *power* which is given by the *ordainers*; it is imagined by some that "they give no power at all, but only let the people know that they are qualified, and *merely for order sake*, declare that he is called of Christ to be a minister."—From this scheme it is plain that he has his authority before he is ordained; for all the after solemnity is only for ordersake. But this notion is extremely absurd, for then men and women and all sorts of people may set up for teachers: how easy is it, to get some of their followers to say they are qualified, and have *excellent gifts*: how easy is it for them to say, they *devote themselves to the special service of Christ*: and if so, they immediately commence ministers of the gospel: as for their ordination by pastors, it is not *necessary*, as is commonly maintained; so that I can see no reason, according to this hypothesis, why a qualified person should be hindered from exercising his faculties, or from putting that *authority* in execution which Christ has given him, only because some men will be so refractory, as not to *recognise* his authority.—This notion of *ordination* invests the power of ordaining in laity as well as clergy, which is no where to be found in scripture: for any man may declare another qualified for the office of a minister, and then without any farther ceremony, he may dispense the sacraments of Jesus Christ: which is a notion that will leave the whole frame of church government at the mercy of every man's power. A third reason against this notion is, that it gives not to the *ordainers*, that *power and authority which Christ gave them*. For Christ tells them, "as my father sent me, so send I you;" which is a general commission to them, as his ambassadors, to act his part upon earth, when he was gone, and therefore must be applied to every part of that power which he left them; for immediately when he said this, he breathed

I were giving directions to one, whom he should make a judge, I would advise him to chuse a sober, just man, well skilled in the laws, &c. and tell him, that these were the qualifications required by the law of God in a judge; but could any man be so inconsiderate as to imagine, that none were lawful judges, but such as had these qualifications; or that all who had them were *valid judges*, whether they had a commission or not?

on them, and said to them, "receive ye the Holy Ghost," John 20. 22. In this sense the apostles understood it, as appears by their putting this power in execution. They thought they had received power from Christ to commission others, without which commission, none could act as Christ's ambassadors: and therefore whenever they ordained, they always laid on their hands, which was a ceremony constantly made use of, to signify the giving of power and authority. Thus St. Paul communicated the *χαρισμα το του* "the gift of the spirit," unto Timothy "by the laying on of his hands," 2 Tim. 1, 6. See Acts 6. 6.—Acts 13. 3. And as this SACRED IMPOSITION OF HANDS in ORDINATION was always appropriated to one of the clergy superior to presbyters, and whom we call bishop; so, in the ages immediately following that of the apostles, we shall find it so inherent in the person of the bishop, that it was looked upon as sacrilege and madness for any of an inferior order, any mere presbyter, to pretend to it.*

Thus therefore, it is, says bishop Beveridge, that the apostolic office has been handed down from one to another ever since the apostles days to our time; and so will be to the end of the world, Christ himself being continually present at such imposition of hands, thereby transferring the same spirit, which he at first breathed

* The only text produced to countenance ordination by presbyters, is 1 Tim. 4. 14.—Now St. Paul was certainly superior to mere presbyters, and we find, 2 Tim. 1. 6. that he was present and laid on his hands in Timothy's ordination. This is evident, that the ordination could not have been valid without St. Paul's concurrence; for in 2 Tim. 1. 6. the preposition used is *δια*, per, by the imposition of my hands; but in 1 Tim. 4. 14. it is only *μετα*, cum, with the laying on the hands of the presbyter. For in producing effects, *δια* denotes the principal, and *μετα*, the assistant causes. Therefore, St. Paul ordained Timothy, with the assistance of some presbyters, for the greater solemnity of the act; and this is the custom of our church also.

As for Acts 1. 13. this ordination was done by the express command of the Holy Ghost; besides prophets were often joined with apostles, as of the greatest authority in the church. See bishop Potter, p. 287.

On this head, see Thomas's answer to Owen's plea for Scripture Ord. 1711. Invalidity of Diss. ministry, in answer to Peirce, Owen's validity, and King's enquiry, 1717, and second part against Peirce's defence, 1718. Jackman's reply to do. 1718. Answer to the Case of ordination, 1713.

into his apostles, upon others successively after them, as really as he was present with the apostles themselves, when he first breathed it into them. Insomuch, that they who are thus ordained, are said to be made bishops by the Holy Ghost himself, as well as the apostles were, Acts 20. 28. By which means, the holy catholic church always hath been, and still is truly apostolic, as it is called in the Nicene creed. And the several parts of the apostolic office are now as effectually performed by their successors, and others ordained under them, as they were while the apostles themselves lived. For it was not the persons of the apostles, but their office, influenced and assisted by the spirit of God, that made the sacraments they administered, to be valid, and their preaching of the gospel so prevalent upon those that heard it. Though Paul himself planted, and Apollos watered, it was God only that gave the increase. And so it is to this day. All the efficacy that there is or can be in the administration of any ecclesiastical office, depends altogether upon the spirit of God, going along with the office, and assisting at the execution of it. Without which the sacraments we administer would be but empty signs, and our preaching no more than beating of the air. Bishop Beveridge's Sermons, vol. 1. 20.

I have, as I think, proved that there is a divine commission required to qualify any one to exercise the priestly office, and that seeing this divine commission can only be had from such particular persons as God has appointed to give it, therefore it is *necessary* that there should be a CONTINUAL SUCCESSION of such persons, in order to keep up a commissioned order of the clergy. For, says Mr. William Law, if the commission itself be to descend through ages, and distinguish the clergy from the laity; it is certain, the persons, who alone can give this commission, must descend through the same ages, and consequently an *uninterrupted succession* is as necessary as that the clergy have a divine commission. Take away this succession, and the clergy may as well be ordained by one person as another; a number of women may as well give them a divine commission, as a congregation of any men; they may indeed appoint persons to officiate in holy orders, for the sake of *decency* and *order*; but then there is no more in it, than an external *decency* and *order*; they are no more the priests of God, than

those that pretended to make them so. If we had lost the scriptures, it would be very well to make as good books as we could, and come as near them as possible ; but then it would be not only folly, but presumption, to call them the word of God.

If it should be asked "how it can be believed that the Succession has been continued in our own or any other episcopal church ?" I answer in the words of Mr. Law, why (to speak in his own terms) it is *morally impossible* the succession ever should have been broken in all that term of years, from the apostles to the present times. The reason is this : it has been a received doctrine in every age of the church, that no ordination was valid but that of bishops. This doctrine has been a constant guard upon the episcopal succession ; for seeing it was universally believed that bishops *alone* could ordain, it was *morally impossible* that any persons could be received as bishops, who had not been so ordained. Now is it not *morally impossible* that in our church any one should be made a bishop without *episcopal ordination* ? Is there any possibility of forging orders, or stealing a bishoprick by any other stratagem ? No, it is *morally impossible*, because it is an acknowledged doctrine amongst us, that a bishop can only be ordained by bishops. Now as this doctrine must necessarily prevent any one being a bishop, without *episcopal ordination* in our age, so it must have the same effect in every other age as well as ours : and consequently it is as reasonable to believe that the succession of bishops was not broke in any age since the apostles, as that it was not broke in our kingdom within these forty years.

And by perusing the canons* of the primitive church, it is obvious to perceive what a regard it had to the preservation of the succession. In the apostolic canons, it is enjoined that a bishop should be ordained by three at least, and likewise that he should be constituted with the approbation of his metropolitan, and comprovincials ; which practices were certainly a very great security to the right succession, it being not very likely, that all the bishops of a province, should be so extremely careless as to suffer an irregular ordination, and the persons concerned in it, all void of that character, which they pretended to bestow. Now although three bishops

* Apost. can. 1.—Co. nicen. 4.—Co. arel. 21.—Co. laodic. 12.—Co. par. 6.

were required at the ordination of a bishop, yet it must be granted that only one is essentially necessary. Let us suppose then, that one who was never ordained himself, should take upon him to ordain others, that is to convey an authority which he never received from Christ : yet since two others would be joined with him, one of whom, if not both, would without all doubt be a lawful bishop ; the orders of the person so ordained must necessarily be valid. And although the church of this usurper would, during his life, want a lawful pastor ; yet that want would be made up in his successor ; unless we should suppose that possible to be done *every day* in former times, which we *now* find impossible to be once done, viz. that such intruders should continually creep into churches undiscovered and unregarded. So that notwithstanding such single interruptions in the succession, it is still uninterrupted, and sufficient to convey to us our orders *mediately* from Christ, the fountain of all church power.*

It is objected that "from the idolatrous church of Rome, we derive by ordination, our spiritual and sacerdotal powers."†

To this we answer‡ that the church of Rome, though it be not a *pure* or *sound* church, is nevertheless a *true* church ; as a man is a *true* man, though his soul be corrupted with vice, and his body with loathsome diseases, yet he cannot be called a *right sound* man ; however so long as he had a body and soul united, no one could deny him to be a man, nor would any one deny his descendants to be so ; and though a sound and virtuous son descended from such a father, would have no great reason to be proud of his birth yet he must acknowledge that he received his human nature from him, though his health and virtue were otherwise acquired : and being become a sound man both in body and soul, he might judge it expedient to avoid the company of his father for fear of infection. The Jewish church, though frequently infected with idolatry, and overrun with corruptions, yet never ceased to be a church, so long as that economy continued ; and those good *priests*, who at several times

* Clarke's sermon at the consecration of bishops Sharp, Moore, Cumberland and Fowler, 1691.

† Towgood's third letter, p. 64.

‡ Dr. Brett's divine right of episcopacy, p. 80.

joined with the religious *Kings* of that nation, to reform the idolatrous corruptions which were brought into it, derived their succession in the priesthood from idolatrous fathers; yet this was never thought to have invalidated their succession. Those who could derive their pedigree from Aaron, how wicked or idolatrous any of their immediate or remoter ancestors had been, were nevertheless the true, and only priests, they either had or could have. And though God frequently raised up prophets, men divinely inspired, to threaten them for their idolatry, and their sins; yet he never raised a new priesthood, nor authorized any other, beside the sons of Aaron, to cleanse the tabernacle, or to offer the sacrifices prescribed by the law. Their idolatry and other corruptions did not divest them of the priesthood, nor make any breach in the succession of it, but only made their sacrifices unacceptable, till those corruptions were reformed, and cut off. So we say, that the *idolatry* and *corruptions* of the church of *Rome*, though they had made their worship abominable, and therefore unacceptable to God; yet forasmuch as it had a regular succession of the christian priesthood, derived from Christ and his apostles, and received the holy scriptures as a rule of faith, though but as a *partial* or *imperfect* rule, and both the sacraments as instrumental causes and seals of grace, though they add more, and misuse these, cannot but be a *true* church, and their priests *true* priests, and as capable of conveying that character to others after them, as the idolatrous priests among the Jews could and did convey it to their successors; although it would be unlawful to communicate with them, till they had forsaken their idolatry. Besides the word *reformation*, (which all protestants have applied to their own communion) obliges us to acknowledge the church of *Rome*, for a *true* church. For that is what we say we have reformed. And could we reform that which is not? we did not pretend to erect a *new church*, but to reform and correct the old one, which we found to have been overspread with errors and abuses; these we justly cast off, but we pretend to cast off no more. And therefore as the succession of bishops, priests, and deacons, was no corruption, but an institution of Christ and his apostles, we judged it as necessary to preserve that succession, as any thing else. It is true, abuses had

crept into the manner of conferring these orders, yet so much as the essential parts remained in their Form of ordination, we only lopped off the superfluous adjuncts, not thinking ourselves any more obliged, to reject the orders themselves for the sake of the corruptions, than to reject the *word* and *sacraments*, because they had corrupted them also.*

But the most popular argument against episcopacy is, that "by maintaining it we unchurch some presbyterians abroad, as well as the Scotch kirk and dissenters at home." But, as Mr. Daubeny remarks,† if a minister of the church is to refrain from teaching the fundamental principles of church government, from a consideration of thereby giving offence, by appearing to pronounce sentence against those who separate from it; for the same reason he must refrain from insisting decidedly on any doctrine whatever; for there is no doctrine of the church, which will not meet with parties to whom it is obnoxious. The preaching up, for instance, the being and providence of God, will be offensive to atheists and wordlings (of whom it is to be feared, there is no small number) because they are thereby concluded under damning unbelief. The authority of the scriptures, and the certainty of revealed religion, are points equally offensive to deists and sceptics. The union of the divine and human nature as preparatory to the great work of atonement, is a doctrine not to be insisted upon, because of its alarming consequences to arians, socinians, and unitarians. The doctrine of the christian sacraments must in like manner be kept out of sight, for fear of giving offence to quakers. For my part, says Dr. Brett, I cannot but think it the duty of every honest clergyman, to preach such doctrines as we have received from Christ and his apostles, whomsoever the consequences may reflect upon. I can never think it charitable to sooth men in their mistakes, and give them cause to think I believe them in the right, when I know them to be in error. I am willing to believe as well of presbyterians abroad and dissenters at home, as any man; neither will I condemn them; they

* See also Jus. div. Min. evang. p. 49. 41.—33. 38. of second part, and King against Manby 1687. p. 59.

† And Dr. Hicke's christian priesthood, pref. 193 and 200.

must stand or fall to him that is the master of them and of us all. But as I think them to be in a dangerous error, I think it my duty to let them know it. I hope and pray that God will have mercy on all of them, who offend in this or any other point, through ignorance, prejudice, or an unhappy education, and not of malicious wickedness. But I conceive the nature of christian charity obliges us upon catholic principles, to write them up to our church, and not as the manner of some has been, to write our church down to them. And I have reason to think that if episcopacy had been settled in other reformed churches, as it is in ours, the reformation had made a much larger progress than it has now done. For Mr. Rogne, the French ambassador, said, at the time of the conference at Hampton-court, "that if the other reformed churches had kept the same orders amongst them that we have done, he was assured there would have been many thousands of protestants, more than there now are."

And after all can it be thought reasonable, or indeed lawful, for the church to lay aside this *primitive order of bishops*? Or so far to comply with presbyterians, or other dissenters, as to allow their ordinations to be valid? This would be to act contrary to a plain divine institution, and the constant practice of the whole catholic church in all ages and in all places, from the first establishment of christianity to the times of the reformation. Our adversaries, as the Rev. Philip Skelton our countryman observes, never considered, whether it was in the power of man, to abolish at his discretion, an order of the church, instituted by God himself—and what was equally bold, to begin a new ministry, with hardly any other mission, than such as a number of men, and sometimes one man only, wholly unauthorized, should assume. From men thus sending themselves, or sent by we know not whom, we are to receive the sacraments. And, what is marvellous beyond all conception, this new species of ordination, though apparently of human institution, is now become too sacred to be interrupted, while that which seems at least to be of Christ, is laid aside.—Do we ever hear of any man in scripture who ordained himself, or who presumed to take the ministry of Gods word and sacraments upon him, without being sent either immediately or successively by Christ? or

can any instance of this nature be assigned, during the first fourteen centuries of the church ?”*

Indeed many poor well-meaning dissenters are prepossessed with a false notion, that episcopacy is a relic of popery, as they are pleased to term it. This indeed is so far from being true, that I look on episcopal government, as the best way to keep out popery, or any other error. For episcopacy as established in its just rights, utterly destroys the papal pretences. And one thing propounded as a ground of our reformation, was, the retrieving the original rights of bishops, which the pope had injuriously invaded, whilst he challenged the whole power of governing the catholic church, and making the bishops only his curates. The pope used many methods to diminish the bishops power, such as exempting the monasteries from their jurisdiction, and making them wholly dependent on himself, that the monks might be tools to secure his authority over bishops; in which service the order of Jesuits, was chiefly instrumental. For this purpose too, the schoolmen were set to work, to level bishops, as near as possible with presbyters, by their subtle and nice distinctions. And it is certain, that in the council of Trent, the Italians made great efforts to have it decreed, that bishops as distinct from presbyters were not *jura divino*; and Lainez, the Jesuit, made a long harangue of above two hours, to that purpose. These men were sensible, that the asserting the true original power of bishops, would evince the unreasonableness of the pope's encroachment on their just rights, and show how justly they acted who endeavoured to retrench his exorbitances. And as for the objection of a “Popedom being unavoidable from the episcopal constitution of church government,” it is contrary to matter of fact, and stands now confuted by the consentient testimony and practice not only of the episcopal churches of England, Scotland, Ireland, N. America, Sweden, &c. but also of the Greek and Oriental churches.

I fear that if the Church should ever lose this primitive government by bishops, it would lose its primitive doctrine, and change christianity for socinianism, which has at this time infected many of the churches enemies, who labour to overturn episcopacy, that they may more easily

* Skelton's Sermons, p. 215, Lond. 1808.

spread their false doctrines. For it is observable, says our learned Dr. Maurice,* that in these last ages there have been no heretics, who have not likewise been anti-episcopal; and at the same that they have become enemies to the truth, they declare war against the bishops, who are the guardians of it. And there were more heresies started here in the space of four years after bishops had been laid aside, than there have been known in the universal church, from the foundation of it to that time. And this is acknowledged by Mr. Edwards, a presbyterian teacher, who (in his *Gangræna*†, dedicated to the parliament, 1646,) says, “we in *these four last years* have surpassed the deeds of the prelates, and justified the bishops, in whose time never so many nor so great errors were heard of, much less such blasphemies and confusions; we have worse things among us, than ever were in all the bishops days, more corrupt doctrines, and unheard of practices than in eighty years before.”—The bishops and their chaplains, (who were accounted time-servers) opposed the errors of the times; but the presbyters, suffered all kind of errors and schisms to come in when they were in place; certainly the bishops and their chaplains shall rise up in judgment against the ministry of this generation.—And Salmasius,‡ ingenuously confesses, that although he was no friend to bishops, yet considering that the abolition of episcopacy (in England, A. D. 1646) was followed by an horrible confusion and disturbance of religion; sects without number, which before were confined to hell, and covered with darkness, suddenly breaking forth on all sides by the gate which was then opened, viz. the taking away the fear of bishops, by whom they were formerly suppressed; which would never have happened, if bishops had governed the churches as formerly; and that being taught by that experience, as the last day is master of the former, he changed his opinion, and pronounced that bishops were to be preserved, especially in England, seeing so many evils, followed after they were overthrown.” And the author of the Turkish spy,§ who under the disguise of a mahome-

* Vindication of Primitive church, p. 191.

† P. 175, 195, 145.

‡ Resp. ad Milton.

§ Vol. 2. p. 186.

tan, has taken occasion to undermine christianity in its most fundamental articles, plainly shows, that there is no subverting christianity, till episcopacy be abolished.

Here I might produce the words of many eminent men, among the *foreign* protestants wanting bishops, confessing that the government of the church was episcopal in the next age after the apostles; particularly the famous M. Le Clerc, whose words (in his book *de eligenda inter dissentientes christianos sententia*, subjoined to his edition of Grotius *de veritate*, &c. Amst. 1709) are these: "they who *without prejudice* read what remains of the most ancient christian writers, know well enough, that the episcopal form of government, such as is in the southern part of Great Britain, obtained every where in the next age after the apostles; whence we may collect that it is of apostolic institution." M. Le Moyne, preacher to the reformed congregation at Roan, confesses that "truly I believe, that it is impossible to keep peace or order in your church (of Great Britain) without preserving the episcopal dignity. I confess, I conceive not by what spirit they are led, that oppose that government, and cry it down with such violence.—For I beseech you, let us not flatter ourselves in France, where we have a presbyterian government, that we are not subject to many divisions, which the equality of pastors is not able to compose. And which a synod consisting of *equal persons*, and of elders, and deacons, who often have little skill in ecclesiastical government, is not able to stop; because the authors of the evil hold themselves to be of *equal power*, with those that are of prime note, and despise them that are ordinarily employed to heal those distempers? It is episcopacy which upholds the Lutheran churches; for in Denmark, Sweden, and Germany, they are very quiet under the episcopal discipline, and seldom are seen to slander and tear one another."*

Calvin and Beza, and the rest of the learned reformers also gave their testimony in favour of episcopacy. Calvin in his epistle to Sadolet, said of those who should reject such an hierarchy, that they were "*nullo non anathemate dignos*"†, i. e. that no curse could be too bad

* Le Moyne's letter, in Durell's government of foreign churches, p. 126.

† *Iust. l. 4. c. 4. 9. 2. 4.*

for them." If there be any, says Beza, which you shall hardly persuade me to believe, who reject the order of episcopacy, God forbid that any man in his senses should assent to the madness of such men.* And speaking of the hierarchy of the church of England and her bishops, he says, "let her enjoy that singular blessing of God, which I wish may be perpetual to her." If it be asked, why then did Calvin settle presbyterian government in his church? It may be answered, that no reformed bishop could be had at Geneva, or any conveniently procured to ordain one, so that the first presbyterian government was not founded on choice, but necessity; and therefore is justifiable no longer than whilst there is such necessity.† And long after their day when the presbyterian assembly at Westminster, under the influence of the Scotch covenanters, applied to the learned Blondel to bring forward what could be said in favour of the presbyterian form, with the view of giving countenance to the plan in agitation for overturning the ancient church government in England, he concluded his *Apologia* present. Hieronymi, with these words:‡ "by all that we have said to assert the rights of presbytery, we do not intend to invalidate the ancient, and apostolic constitution of episcopal pre-eminence; but we believe that wheresoever it is established conformably to the ancient canons, it must be carefully preserved; and wheresoever by some heat of contention, or otherwise, it has been put down or violated, it ought to be reverently restored." This conclusion, not being suited to the object the assembly held in view, was, in consequence of very pressing remonstrances against it, kept back; though, in justice to truth, it ought to stand on record, as it here does.

It has been lately asserted, but without any authority, "that, as late as the year 270, bishops were not superior to pastors of congregations§." This notion, as I observed before, was confuted long since by Dr. Maurice, who fully proves that all his adversary's attempts as to *matters of fact*, are unsuccessful and invalid. I never yet heard, (says the learned Maurice||) of any man who

* Tract. de min. Eccl. grad. c. 18, edit. Belg.

† Hooker's Ecc. polity, pref.

‡ Durell, ib. 339.

§ Nicholson's letters to Rogers, p. 74.

|| Defence of dioc. episcopacy, p. 449.

made it essential to a bishop to have many congregations under him. The papists have several bishops with a very small flock, and such as one parish church may contain. They have others who have not so much as one congregation, nor perhaps one christian within their diocese. We indeed distinguish with all the ancient churches, between a bishop and a presbyter: but for the measure of episcopal churches, we willingly subscribe to St. Jerom's judgment, that the bishop of Eugubium is no less a bishop than he of Rome; and the bishop of Tanis, is as much a bishop as he of Alexandria; since it is not the greatness of the city, but *the ordination, that makes a bishop*. In the primitive times, and those next succeeding, the extent of dioceses was very different. In Scythia, there was but one, though many cities; and in some places there were many bishops in villages. Some cities had very large territories belonging to their bishops, others but small; yet still, these bishops accounted themselves all of equal authority, though their dioceses might be very unequal; and never broke communion upon that account. But if some presbyters should attempt then to separate from their bishops, and to set up altar against altar; they incurred the censure of all christian churches, and were shut out of catholic communion by universal consent. As to matter of fact; it is plain, that in the primitive times there were no churches without bishops, such as were acknowledged different from presbyters. And St. Ignatius is bold to say, that "without a bishop, presbyters, and deacons, it cannot be called a church." But as for those who separate from their bishops, whose doctrine they acknowledge to be sound, and set up churches, and make ordinations in opposition to them, and the whole establishment of a national or provincial church, These I shall not scruple to unchurch; since in this I have only the suffrage of antiquity, but the consent of all protestant churches on my side.*

* It has been asserted that many of our eminent reformers were of opinion, that bishops were only of human institution. For a refutation of this scandalous assertion, See Drury's 2d. and 3d. answer to Boyse, and Brett's divine right of episcopacy. Abp. Usher's opinion on church government having been lately much misrepresented, I refer the reader to Drury's 2d. answer, p. 30 and 3d. do. p. 27, 146. to Usher's sermon on the unity of the church, and his Tracts edited by Dr. Barnard, 1657. Leslie's principles are truly represented against Dorrell and Hawarden, p. 4; in Spincker's def. of Case stated, 54, 1714.

I shall conclude this chapter, with quotations from two eminent divines of the last century. The pious dean Stanhope in his comment on the epistle for St. Mark's day, speaking of church government, says, "this spiritual government, episcopacy, being instituted by Christ himself, cannot be abrogated, ought not to be changed by any authority less sacred, any declaration less positive and express, than that by which it was first instituted and established. This, we have reason to believe, would not be wanting, were such authority, in his judgment, mischievous or unnecessary. But, for any to pronounce it so, without any such signification from its author, is certainly most impudent sacrilege and raging impiety." The second shall be from the late bishop Horsley, (whose father had been a dissenting teacher). In his charge to his *clergy* in the year 1790, he thus speaks, "For those who have been nurtured in the bosom of the church, and have gained admission to the ministry, if, from a mean compliance with the humour of the age, or ambitious of the fame of *liberality of sentiment*, (for under this specious name a profane indifference is made to pass for an accomplishment) they affect to join in the disavowal of the authority which they share, or are silent when the validity of their divine commission is called in question; for any, I hope there are few, who hide this weakness of faith, this poverty of religious principle, under the attire of a gown and cassock, they are, in my estimation, little better than infidels in masquerade."

CHAP. V.

Of the Nature and Sin of Schism.

Having proved that the Episcopal form of church government was instituted by our Saviour and his apostles, and has continued the same in regular succession to the present time, I now proceed to consider the nature of schism, a sin which consists in separating from the communion and setting up of teachers independent of the government and destructive of the unity of the christian church.

* The christian church is represented in scripture as *one body*, united to Christ, "who is the head of his church, and the saviour of the body." This St. Paul makes a powerful argument to unity; "endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; there is one body, and one spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism," Eph. 4. 3. What does this bond of peace signify, but the *external* communion of the church, when christians live together as members of the same body, and united to each other, as the members of the natural body are by nerves and sinews? For christians are called *one body*, with respect to their *external* communion, which is represented in the Lord's supper, by their eating of one bread, as St. Paul argues, 1 Cor. 10. 16. "the bread which we break is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many, are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." So that we become one body by *external* and *visible* communion, by being united into one religious society, for the worship of God and our mutual edification, Eph. 4. 13. All those expressions, whereby the scriptures describe the unity of the church, signify one communion, as our Saviour prays for his disciples "that they all may be one;" and for all those who in after ages should believe on him, "that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me," John, 17. 20. From whence it appears, that our Saviour speaks of an *external and visible union*, which may be taken notice of in the world.

How frequent are the exhortations to christian love and unity? "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, and of one mind," Phil. 2. 2. "Hereby shall men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another," John. 13. 24. And wherein this mutual love expressed itself, we learn from the first pattern of the christian church, "And they continued stedfast in the apostles doctrine and fel-

* Sherlock's discourse of religious assemblies, p. 132. 4th edit. 1726. Review of M. H.'s new notion of schism, and the vind. of it, 1692. Vind. of Dr. Sherlock against N. Taylor, 1702.

lawship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers," Acts 2. 42. *that is*, in all the parts and offices of christian communion; this is essential to christian love, to continue in the communion and fellowship of the same body, "that there may be no *schism* in the body," but all firmly united by the common bonds of love and peace. This union is made *external* and *visible* by *christian communion*: and our daily experience tells us how * impossible it is for men to love like brethren, like members of the same body, who are not of the same body, but divide themselves into distinct and separate churches, under different laws, government and discipline. Now if christian love and union be so necessary a duty of christianity, consider what the evil of schism is, which rends the seamless coat of Christ, and divides his church into so many little parties and factions.

If we examine carefully the state of the *apostolic church*, we will find, that none but apostates from christianity, actually separated from the communion of the church. There were *schisms* and divisions in the church of Carinth, which St. Paul reproves them for, but we do not find that they actually separated into distinct communions, but contended among themselves about the preference of several apostles: "every one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos," &c. But besides these schisms in the church, (which St. Paul makes a great sign of carnality; "for are ye not carnal; for there is among you envying, and strife, and division," &c. I Cor. 3. 3, 4.) there were also *schisms from the church*: "For of this sort are they who creep into houses (who keep secret meetings,) and lead captive silly women, led away with divers lusts; ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth:"

* The unity of the christian church will as certainly lead to a catholic spirit of good will and amicable fellowship, as does the division of it to the opposite disposition. Daubeny's guide, p. 335.—"An *external visible* unity of the church, which is best seen in the unity of her government, worship, discipline, and external communion, is not to be despised; but should be eagerly sought after, for the sake of promoting the *internal* unity of the church, or that great end, the edification of the body of Christ." Nicholson's (presbyterian) letters, Belfast, 1810, p. 20. I hope this author will attend to what he says, p. 79. "We should beware of entertaining any particular notions concerning church government, which might render us *schismatical churches*, divided from the church universal."

which plainly shows that they set themselves up against the apostles, and gathered churches in opposition to them. Of such separatists St. John speaks, whom he calls Antichrists, 1 John, 2. 18, 19. Where he expressly affirms that "they went out from them;" i. e. forsook the christian assemblies: by which he proves that they did not belong to the same body and society, but had entertained such doctrines as were destructive of the christian faith, for otherwise they would not have separated from the christian church.

Now this necessarily supposes, that christian communion is so indispensable a duty, that no man can causlessly separate from the christian church, without at least bringing his christianity into question; that nothing can reasonably tempt men to separation, but their renouncing some great article of the christian faith; nor can any thing justify a separation, but *such corruptions* as destroy the faith once delivered to the saints: for otherwise there had been no force in the apostles argument, to prove that they were corrupt in the faith from their separation: "they went out from us, because they were not of us: for if they had been of us, no doubt they would have continued with us."

Now if this were the case, that, besides those divisions among christians in the same communion, which are called *schisms* by St. Paul, there were formal separations from the church, of a much more heinous nature, which none in those days were guilty of, but those who renounced the purity of the christian doctrine; if such separations were always condemned in the primitive church, as * heresy and apostasy from christianity, though such separatists were not guilty of any *fundamental* error in doctrines of *faith*, I see not what † Dr. Owen gains, by proving that separation is no schism, when it appears to be a much greater evil. And indeed if Dr. Owen will allow *schism* to be a great evil, when it signifies no more than contentions in a church, any one would reasonably

* Thus Felicissimus and his adherents, are called by St. Cyprian, "*heretica factio*," though the schism was occasioned only by a dispute of discipline. So that in St. Cyprian's time separation from the church, without any other error in the fundamentals of faith, was called *heresy*.

† Inquiry into evang. churches, p. 231.

think that separation *from* a church, should be a much greater evil : for contentions are then come to their height, when they make friends and brethren part company.

And there is scarce any other sin more aggravated in the New Testament than this ; it being so directly contrary to that Unity of his church, which our Saviour prayed for, and his apostles with so much earnestness recommend to all christians. " Nothing* says St. Chrysostom, provokes God more, than to divide his church : nay, the blood of martyrdom will not wash off the guilt of it. The mischief the church receives by it, is greater than it receives from open enemies ; for the one makes it more glorious, the other exposes it to shame among its enemies, when it is set upon by its own children. This, (continues he) I speak to those, who make no great matter of schism, and indifferently go to the meetings of those who divide the church. If their doctrine be contrary to ours, for that reason they ought to abstain : if not, *ολλω μωλλω*, they ought to do it so much the more. Do not you know what Corah, Dathan, and Abiram suffered ? and not they only, but those that were with them. But you say, they have the same faith, and they are very orthodox : why then do they separate ? If they have the same doctrine, the same sacraments, for what cause do they set up another church in opposition to ours ? It is nothing but vain-glory, ambition and deceit. Take away the people from them, and you cut off the disease." And after much more to that purpose, " I speak these things, says he, that no man might say, he did not know it to be such a sin : I tell you, and testify this to you, that separation from the church, or dividing it, is no less a sin, than falling into heresy." And I do earnestly desire our brethren, says bishop Stillingfleet, as they love their own souls, and would avoid the guilt of so great a sin, impartially, and without prejudice to consider this passage of St. Chrysostom, and how parallel it is with their own case who separate from us, and set up

* In Ephes. 4. p. 822.—The reason why the gospel has threatened such severe punishment against schism, is to make the authority of the church sacred and venerable, that no man should dare to divide the communion of the church, or to separate from the bishops and pastors, without great and necessary reason.—Infallibility whether real or pretended, cannot secure a church against schisms and separations.

other churches in opposition to ours, which yet they acknowledge to be very orthodox, and to agree with them in the same doctrine, and the same sacraments.

Having now shown the divine right of the episcopal government, and the sin of separation from it without great and sufficient reasons, I shall briefly explain in three particulars, what that christian communion is, which is essential to a particular *diocesan church*.*

I. *That all who live within the precincts of such a church, meet together with their neighbour christians, at public and solemn times and places for religious worship :* and nothing can justify a separation from the church, but sinful terms of communion.

II. *To live in communion with the bishop of that church ;* for the unity and communion of a church consists in the union between pastor and people. St. Cyprian defines a church to be “a people united to their bishop, and a flock keeping close to their pastor.” Nor is there any difficulty in explaining what it is to live in communion with our bishop, which signifies to worship God in the communion of that church, whereof he is bishop, to obey his rules and orders, to reverence his counsels and censures, and in all things which concern the matters of religion and christian worship, to be subject to his authority and directions, while he enjoins nothing contrary to the rules of scripture, or inconsistent with any part of our duty to God and man.

III. The third thing essential to the communion of a particular diocesan church, is, *To live in the communion only of those presbyters, who live in the communion of their bishop,* that is, who officiate by his authority, and are subject to his directions and orders. This was a standing rule in St. Ignatius's time, as is evident from his epistles, “that presbyters must do nothing in the church, but by the bishop's consent or order, and those who do, are schismatics, and those people who adhere to them in it, partake in the guilt of their schisms.” Such were Felicissimus, and those other presbyters of Carthage, who broke communion with St. Cyprian their bishop, whom he therefore excommunicated, and forbade his people to communicate with them, under pain of excommunication, and describes their schism to be “separating the sheep from

* Dean Sherlock's vind. of Dr. Stillingfleet, p. 438.

their pastor, and children from their parents." Nor can those amphibious christians be excused from schism, who sometimes go to church, and sometimes to a conventicle, for, though they are not in a constant state of schism, as not having wholly forsaken the communion of their bishop, yet every time they go to a meeting-house, they are guilty of a schismatical act; and had we a St. Cyprian among us at this day, they would not be suffered to shift turns thus between a church and a meeting-house, for he expressly declared, "that those who communicated with his schismatical presbyters, should not be suffered to communicate in the church with him."

Now it is objected, "that by the fact of the secession of our church from the church of Rome, every individual may plead his separation from the church of Ireland." But yet these cases are vastly different. For we affirm that the bishop of Rome had no legal authority over our church, but in fact it was an usurped authority. The church of Rome is but a particular church, whose authority extends no farther than to its native members, and consequently hath no more power to impose laws of communion upon us, than we have upon her. Our church reformed itself as a national episcopal church, on the ground of its original independence on the See of Rome. Besides, the communion of that church was defiled with the profession of those damnable errors, and the practice of those superstitions and idolatries which we have abolished; such as their doctrine of transubstantiation, sacrifice of the mass, half-communion, worship of images, adoration of the host, and the rest of those abominations, whereof the communion of that church does in great part consist.*

But the case of private christians, whether of ours, or any other particular church, is vastly different. For if we will allow particular churches to be so many formed societies of christians, (as we must do, or else degrade them into so many confused multitudes,) we must necessarily allow them to have a just authority, (even as all other formed societies have,) over their own members. So that though one particular church may refuse the impositions of another, and that not only as they are sinful, but as they are impositions, because the other hath no lawful

* Dr. Claget's difference of the case; &c. 1686.

authority over it; yet it is by no means lawful for the subjects of any particular church, to disobey their church governors in any lawful matter; because being subjected by Christ to their authority, they are obliged to submit to them, as to his substitutes and vice-gerents in every thing which he hath not antecedently prohibited. And if rather than do so, they shall chuse to revolt from the communion of the church, they are schismatics, or rebels to Christ's authority in that particular church they revolt from.

If any thing less than *sinful terms* of communion can justify a separation, then there can be no end of separations, and catholic communion is an impossible and impracticable notion; that is, the church of Christ neither is one body, nor ever can be.—Reasons for separation are not to be determined by men's fancies, which they call the dictates of conscience; but upon plain and evident grounds, manifesting the repugnancy of the things required to the laws and institutions of Christ, and that they are of *that importance*, that he allows men rather to divide from such a communion, than join in the practice of such things. "The sin of schism, (* says John Ball, an old non-conformist,) if unjust, is so heinous, the ill consequences and mischiefs so many and fearful, that all christians should be well advised neither to lay stumbling blocks before the feet of others, which might occasion their turning aside, nor to seek occasions of departure, but rather to wait and tarry till they be *assured* that the Lord goeth before them.—The faithful have ever tolerated weaknesses and infirmities in each other, and abuses in the church, so long as the *foundation* was held, and *they agreed in the main*."—It was never (as dean Sherlock remarks,) till of late days thought lawful to separate from a lawful communion; though as the state of church, in this world is, it were subject to some defects; and therefore the Brownists, who separated from the church of England, pretended that her worship and government was idolatrous and antichristian; and the old non-conformists, (one of whom was the above-mentioned Mr. Ball), who thought they could not conform as ministers, yet *very religiously conformed as laymen*, both in prayers and sacraments, condemned this schism, and proved that

* Ball's friendly trial of the grounds of separation, p. 183, 1640.

communion with the church of England was lawful; and therefore separation was sinful: and I dare challenge any man to show me, from the first beginning of christianity, that ever it was thought lawful to separate from a church, where we might communicate without sin.

I shall therefore briefly examine the terms of communion of the Church, and clearly prove that she retains all the essentials of christian faith, worship, and government, and imposes no unlawful or sinful terms of communion upon her members; and consequently that it is the duty not only of her own members, to hold *constant* communion with her, but also of the members of other protestant assemblies, to unite themselves to her communion, in order to avoid the guilt of schism. I do not intend to speak of the terms, upon which persons are to be admitted among us to the exercise of the function of the ministry; but *only* of the terms of *lay communion*, i. e. of those which are necessary for all persons to join in our prayers and sacraments, and other offices of divine worship. And this must be *carefully attended to*, for there has been a great deal of art used to confound these two, and I dare say the people not understanding the difference of these two cases, has been a great occasion of all our separations. For although the subscriptions and declarations required of ministers, may in some instances operate so powerfully on the mind, as to discourage a man from entering into holy orders; yet it ought not to be inferred from thence, that the people cannot join in our public worship, with a good conscience.

But to speak the truth, the generality of dissenting writers, teachers, and people, do not think that lay-communion with our church is unlawful. This is evident not only from their occasionally joining with us as lay-persons, and some of them for many years, but also from the approbation of the general assembly of the presbyterians of Scotland. For in their memorial to the House of Commons, A. D. 1790, they expressly allow "that the members of the kirk of Scotland may conscientiously communicate occasionally with the church of England." So that the people are condemned in their separation by their own teachers. And it is justly remarked by the presbyterian assembly of England in 1648, in their writings against the inde-

pendents,* "that to separate from those churches ordinarily and visibly with whom occasionally, you may join with without sin, seemeth to be a *most unjust separation*." Truly I know not how the presbyterians of Scotland can excuse their separation from the lawful bishops of that country; they surely do not imagine that the act of parliament by which they are established, can take away the sin of schism. It is acknowledged by Irish presbyterians† of the present day, that "episcopalians belong to the true church of Christ as well as presbyterians," that "we are brethren with them in Christ;" and they have even given up the *divine right* of presbyterian government, they say that it is "not essential," and that "the plan of government may be accommodated to existing circumstances," and moreover "that difference upon this subject, where men are agreed in the fundamental truths of the gospel, is no sufficient reason for breaking the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, or for withdrawing from communion with each other."‡

To this author, and to those who agree with him on this subject, I address the words of the pious Mr. Skelton.§ "As to you, who regard church government and the other differences between yourselves and us, as nothing, surely you must look on peace and unity on one side, and schism on the other, as less than nothing, if you continue to dissent.—Your safest way then must be to join with the establishment, because by that means you avoid the sin of schism at least, which must be a great and real sin in you, while you dissent."||

After so many acknowledgements of the *lawfulness* and *safety* of the communion of our church, it may almost be unnecessary to proceed any farther; but in order to point out the excellency of our liturgy and worship, and to obviate some objections, that may be made against them; I shall briefly examine them, and prove that the LAITY are not required to join in any thing *unlawful*.

* Papers for accommodation, p. 48.

† Nicholson's letters to Rogers, p. 17, 1810.

‡ M'Dowel's presb. government. p. 12, 1808.

§ Sermons, 2d. edit. Lond. 1808. p. 231.

|| The lawfulness of our communion and the sin of separating from it, has always been the opinion of the French protestants. See Bingham's French church apology for the church of England, in answer to Quick's Synodicon, and Baxter's Engl. Nonconf.

CHAP. VI.

*The Church of Ireland is a true and sound member
of the Catholic Church.*

A true church, (as Dr. Burgess the present excellent bishop of St. David's, observes,) is that in which the word of God is preached, and the sacraments are duly administered by persons rightly ordained; and a pure church is that which is free from all doctrines and ordinances which are contrary to the scriptures.—And such I hope now to show is the reformed church of Ireland, viz. a true and a pure church.

It will not be necessary to use many words in defence of the DOCTRINES OF OUR CHURCH. For if the fall of man, and his redemption in Christ Jesus, the divinity of the Saviour, the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, the Trinity in unity, justification by faith, &c. are the distinguishing doctrines of christianity, they are alike the distinguishing doctrines of our church. They are not only asserted in all their force and purity, in the articles and homilies, but they are inspired into every part of her religious services. They breathe in all her prayers and thanksgivings; they pervade her exhortations, confessions, intercessions; they are the soul, that animates the whole body of her liturgy.*

It is alleged by some, "that our clergy in general, place mans hopes, upon the ground of his moral performances." But this unjust and erroneous assertion ought not to pass unnoticed. For the clergy were ordained to preach the doctrines of the gospel; they have subscribed to all the articles of religion, and publicly declared their unfeigned assent and consent to the use of all things contained in the book of common prayer; they have been approved and licensed by the bishop of the diocese, who, says bishop Beveridge, if he find just cause for it, is empowered and obliged to take away his licence again,

* See an excellent treat of Rev. Mr. Taylor of Nayland, entitled, an Answer to the question Why are you a churchman? 4th edit. Lond. 1807.

and to suspend him from the execution of his office. So that if a christian lives under a minister that does not act according to these rules, or doth not preach according to the doctrine of the gospel, or doth not perform his duty in every thing as he ought; it is in a great measure his own fault, in that he doth not acquaint the bishop with it, whose office it is to redress such grievances as these are.*

If any church upon earth, as bishop Hoadly wisely remarks, may be said to have taken care that the people's salvation shall not be endangered through this inconvenience, certainly it must be granted that our church hath effectually done it. Were the public assemblies indeed left to the sole guidance of the minister of the parish; were the people to be served with nothing, but what he could or would afford them; were they to be entertained with prayers wholly according to the abilities, or the present fancy, invention, and disposition of the minister; were he left to his liberty, whether he would read them any part of Gods word, or not, whether he would use the Lords prayer, the creed, the ten commandments, or not; were the poor people in such a case, under the provision of the church, then indeed the ignorance of their minister might be a deplorable misfortune to them. But, God be thanked, the case is not so in our church; though it be in the churches set up in opposition to it, and under pretence of greater purity of worship and edification of the people. But in ours, the people have no necessity of departing from the most insufficient minister you can easily find. For the decencies and essentials of public worship, (the chief end of public assemblies,) are secured to them. They have prayers prepared for them, serious and pious; and every devout supplicant may read his duty, and the motives of his duty, in his truly evangelical petitions. They are sure of hearing the *pure* word of God, in the reading of which they may join, and from which, by a serious attention, they may reap, I hope, as much advantage, as from any *human* composure whatever. The Lords prayer, the creed, the ten commandments, are constantly part of their instruction on the Lords day, from which they may learn what it is proper for them to ask of God, what it is necessary

* Bishop Beveridge's sermons, vol. 1. p. 139.

for them to believe, what it is their duty to practise. And this is their certain instruction, however insufficient their minister be ; which is a great and unspeakable happiness to a land, how lightly soever you teach your people to think of it.

II. I shall next prove, that the church of Ireland retains all the essentials of CHRISTIAN WORSHIP, i. e. the invocation of the one eternal God, through the one mediator Jesus Christ, and the participation of the two sacraments of baptism and the Lords supper, and that we may partake in her worship without committing sin.—The truth of the first part of this assertion is so manifest, that it has never been doubted by any true protestant. But as for the latter, whether we may partake in her worship, without partaking in any sin, this I shall now examine. For, certainly, (as it is laid down by Dr. Bennet,) nothing, but the danger of damnation by conformity, can justify non-conformity.

The nature of christian worship obliges us to church communion. I suppose that no man will deny but that every christian is bound to worship God according to our Saviours institution : and what that is, we may learn from the example of the primitive christians, that “they continued steadfast in the apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayer.” That which makes any thing in a strict sense an act of church communion, is that it is performed in “the fellowship of the apostles,” or in communion with the bishops and ministers of the church. They are appointed to offer up the *prayers* of christians to God in his name, and none but public prayers are properly the prayers of the church, and acts of church communion. It is essential to the nature of the *Lords supper*, that it is a common feast of which all christians partake ; for it signifies not only our union to Christ, but our union to one another in the same body ; for which reason the reformed churches universally condemn the private masses of the church of Rome, where the priest receives by himself ; and truly, private devotions, when they thrust out public worship, are much of the same nature.—So that the very institution of a church, the example of the primitive christians, and those sacraments of our religion, may convince us how neces-

every christian communion and public worship is, if we will be the disciples of Christ; and we are expressly commanded by St. Paul, "not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together."*

To hear the word of God read or preached, is but a *secondary* act of public worship. The worship of God properly consists in our offering sacrifices of prayer and thanksgivings to God, which are highly pleasing to him, when offered up by a devout soul in the name and merits of our mediator Jesus Christ. So that those who neglect the prayers of the church, neglect public worship, and those who slight the opportunity of public prayers, when there is no sermon to invite their presence, plainly discover, that they prefer pleasing their curiosity with hearing some new discourse, before the solemn acts of worship; which is a great sign that they hear to very little purpose, when the end of hearing is practice, and the most excellent part of practical religion is the immediate worship of God. "The action of the liturgy, (says lord Bacon) is as high and holy as that of the sermon." It is said "my house shall be called the house of prayer," not the house of preaching. To which Mr. Jones adds, *that* man will ever be found the best christian, who attends the church more for prayer than preaching. It is no certain test of true piety, when a man runs after sermons, and neglects the great duty of public prayer. The *itching* of the ear is not a virtue, but a distemper; often attended with many other dangerous symptoms.†

‡ It is greatly to be lamented, that men who profess the same faith, and agree in all the essentials of worship, should divide communion, and refuse to pray together, and to feast at the same holy table of our Lord. We cannot communicate with the *church of Rome*, because they have corrupted the very essentials of christian worship. Most men do not understand their Latin prayers, and therefore cannot join in prayer with them; they worship images and pictures, which is expressly forbidden by the second commandment. Instead of praying to God in the name of our only mediator and advocate Jesus Christ, they have joined other intercessors with him; pray

* Sherlock's discourse of religious assemblies, p. 96.

† Jones's Churchman's catechism, p. 10. 1796.

‡ Sherlock's sermons, vol. 1. p. 16. third edition, 1719.

to saints and angels, and the Virgin Mary to pray for them and help them. They worship the host which we believe to be nothing but bread and wine as to the substance, and therefore no object of worship; and turn the sacramental feast of Christ's body and blood into a propitiatory sacrifice for the living and dead. Such a worship as this we dare not join in, because it is sinful and idolatrous. But the case is quite different among *protestants*; they pray to the same God, in the only name of the same Lord Jesus Christ; put up petitions, offer the same thanksgivings and praises, observe the same divine institutions, without any essential alteration, and yet cannot worship God together; as if it were an impious thing to put up the same prayers, and offer the same praises to God in a pious and grave and well composed form of words, which others do, it may be not so well or decently, in their conceived prayers; as if the devotion of the communicant, in receiving so inestimable a blessing as the sacramental body and blood of Christ upon his knees, were a profanation of that holy feast: as if a white linen garment, which is only used as a decent habit, without any opinion of its virtue and sanctity, were a just reason to drive men out of the church, from the christian communion of prayers and sacraments. These would be surprising stories to any christians in the world, who had never heard before of such disputes among us.

The principal thing objected against in our church, is prescribing a *FORM OF PRAYER* to be constantly used in public worship. As for the *lawfulness* of a form, we have the practice of our Saviour and his apostles, who joined in the Jewish worship, where a set form was used. Christ also taught his disciples to pray by a form, (when ye pray, say, Our father &c.) and although we should suppose that they were not always bound to use it, it plainly proves, that the christian religion does not forbid praying by a form.* The Lutheran and Bohemian churches, the Danes, Swedes, the church of Geneva, Holland, France, America, England, Ireland, and the Scotch episcopal church have their liturgies or forms of

* Dr. Bennet has proved that the ancient Jews, our Saviour and his apostles, and the primitive christians never joined in any prayers, but pre-composed set forms; see his History of set forms, second edition, 1708. his Discourse of joint prayer, and his Two letters to B. Robinson,

prayer, and also many dissenting congregations in England; and the ministers of the kirk of Scotland are not unwilling to use them in their churches, but "are afraid that the *prejudices* of the people would not endure the introduction of them." See Christian Observer, October, 1809.

* Let us now consider the manner of performing public worship in dissenting meetings, where no form is used. There is no public form either of confession, prayer, or thanksgiving: consequently, the congregation have not the opportunity to join in the worship of God; they are *hearers* only; it is the minister (so called) who prays, and not the people: for it is not possible for them to join in petitions, or to lift up their voice with one accord in the celebration of praises, which they are unprepared to accompany, because ignorant what may be uttered. As the congregation are but little concerned in the performance of the service, they can in reason have little to expect from their attendance. But this is their error, viz. they think it is their ministers business to pray, and theirs to sit or stand and listen to him: thus they regard a prayer in the same manner they do a sermon, expecting instruction and entertainment from it.—There is no plainer evidence for the necessity of set forms of prayer in public worship, than our Saviour's own words, Matt. 18. 19. "if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them by my Father which is in Heaven." Now how can two or three, that is a congregation of christians, agree together, in what they shall ask, except they ask in a set form, which they are all acquainted with, before the prayer is offered; that so all may know what petitions are to be made? Yet this is the case of those who meet together, to hear an extempore prayer, which not one of them knows one petition of beforehand, except the speaker himself, if he does.

In the public worship of God of the church, the congregation may all become actual partakers, and may join in the solemn sacrifice of prayer and thanksgiving, with humble, penitent, and contrite hearts: and in the words of David, "they worship and bow down, and

* Causes and pretences for separation, examined by R. Woodward, vicar of Harold, 1802. Daubeny's Guide, p. 181.

and before the Lord their maker." But in the meetings, they are no otherwise employed in time of prayer than in the sermon, that is to stand or sit at their ease and hear; and not in an humble posture to pray. On the other hand, the members of our church, upon their knees, present their petitions to God with heart and voice, with as much fervour and devotion as the minister. In the church service, there is no danger of such unwary expressions, arising from confusion or incoherent conception,* as may degrade the solemnity of prayer, or insult the majesty of heaven, by offering up prayers to the throne of heavenly grace, in a confused and unprepared manner. "Be not rash, says Solomon, with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God." But the public worship is performed, as it ought to be: both minister and people joining with humble, penitent, and contrite hearts, in the solemn sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; and repeating that prescribed form of prayer, which our Saviour has left for the continual use of his disciples and followers, to the end of the world.—Our liturgy affords suitable prayers for all our common wants, whether spiritual or temporal. If any extraordinary occasion happens, the bishops are empowered to compose special forms. And as for the unusual circumstances of private persons, they want not sufficient helps and directions in such cases.

These considerations, are sufficient to show the expediency of performing the public worship by a form of prayer, which being deliberately composed by men eminent for knowledge and abilities, must be a great relief against the insufficiency or imprudence of those who officiate, and being previously known, may readily be joined in by every christian, without fear of being misled by the minister.

As for the LITURGY of OUR CHURCH, "one would be apt to think, says archbishop Hort, that it should be no small recommendation of it, that many of the first compilers of it, suffered as martyrs for the protestant faith;" and as for the exceptions that have been made against it, the most that can be urged, are some supposed inconveniences, which, if we would grant to be real, cannot make our communion *unlawful*; and then, as I have intimated, it

* See Dr. Bennet on joint prayer, chap. 7.

must be a sin to separate from it ; and we may not commit a sin to decline an inconvenience : this would be "to do evil, that good may come of it." These OBJECTIONS I shall briefly examine *

The Liturgy may be divided into two parts, viz. 1. The ordinary sunday service. 2. The occasional offices of baptism, confirmation, &c.—As for the Sunday service, some object to *bodily worship*. But for this we find an express command, Psal. 95. 96. "O come, let us worship, and bow down ; and kneel before the Lord." And that this is meant of public worship, is evident from the 2d verse : "let us come before his presence with thanksgiving." Agreeably to this, St. Paul urges us to glorify God in our body and in our spirit," 1 Cor. 6. 20 ; i. e. by outward, as well as inward devotion. And we find in scripture some act of this bodily worship accompanying every religious performance. Thus prayers are generally offered *kneeling*, and that so constantly, that "to bow the knee," in scripture language is to pray ; and praises, thanksgivings, and confessions of faith are offered *standing*. In conformity to this, we stand up at our praises, thanksgivings, and creeds ; and at our confession of sin, and at our prayers, we present ourselves before God on our knees.† And it is observed by a dissenter, in the Monthly Repository, 1807, p. 629, that the praying attitude in the New Testament is always a kneeling one, and that Dr. Enfield, (a dissenting teacher,) judging of the propriety of an humble posture in a creature when addressing his God, as well as of the beneficial use of liturgies, for enabling the congregation to take a requisite share in the devotions with the minister, had introduced into his meeting-house, prayer books, and hassocks for kneeling.

Bowing at the name of *Jesus*, says archbishop King, is not required of you, there being no rule for it

* See Lawfulness of conformity, against Owen's plain dealing, and Lay noneconf. just. 1717. Dr. Smith's answer to Palmer's catechism, 1808. Landon's Answer to Tomgood's third letter, 1763, and Andrews's, do. 1802. Free and impartial considerations on the Free and candid disquisitions, 1751.

† Bishop King on the inventions of men in the worship of God, in London cases, vol. 3d, and his Two admonitions against Boyce and Craghead.

in the church of Ireland.—In the *Athanasian creed*, all that is required of us as necessary to salvation, is explained in the 3d and 4th verses. But all that follows to the 26th verse, is only brought as an illustration of it, and therefore requires no more assent than a sermon does, which is made to explain a text. The text is the word of God, and therefore necessary to be believed, but no person, is for that reason bound to believe every particular of the sermon deduced from it, under pain of damnation; though every tittle of it may be true. This explanation is fully vindicated in Dr. Bennet on the Common prayer, p. 262, where he clearly proves from bishops Pearson, Stillingfleet, &c. that the belief of the procession from the Father and the Son, is not necessary to salvation; and that in the use of this creed, we do not condemn the Greek church.—The lessons from the *Apocrypha*, are not appointed to be read on the Lord's day, but any time, (as the admonition prefixed to the homilies show,) the minister is at liberty to substitute some portion of canonical scripture in their stead.* As for some relations in them, that are pretended to be fabulous; see Falkner's *Libert. Eccles.* p. 164, and Bennet, *ubi supra*, 251.

We do not think *kneeling at the sacrament* an act, but a posture of worship, as it is of prayer; and therefore do not kneel to the bread and wine, but receive them kneeling, as expressing that reverence and devotion of mind, which becomes such a mysterious worship, and as a posture suitable to those prayers which in the act of receiving, we put up to heaven. That this posture is not *unlawful* is confessed by dissenters themselves. "In some of our churches, (says a dissenting teacher,†) there are some who receive standing, some kneeling. Nor is there I believe, amongst our ministers, one in five hundred, who would refuse the sacrament, either standing or kneeling, to any person."—For the lawfulness of *Instruments* in the praises of God, see *Psalm* 150. 3.—*Exod.* 15. 20.—*Rev.* 5. 8. and 14. 2. Organs are not required by any rule of our church, and therefore it is the people's choice, whether they will use the help of them or not. It is well known that they are now used in many dissent-

* Hart's answer to Gill, Bristol, 1791, p. 36.

† Towgood's 1st. letter, p. 19.

ing congregations, therefore they themselves confess the lawfulness of them.

2. The occasional offices. In the *Office of baptism* we are said to be regenerated, and grafted into the body of Christ's church. So in the scripture, we are said by baptism to be made members of Christ's body, "by one spirit, we are all baptized into one body," 1 Cor. 12, 13. and baptism is called "the washing of regeneration," Tit. 3. 5. And the Directory says the same; for the minister is ordered to instruct the people at baptism, that it is a seal of the covenant of grace, of our ingrafting into Christ and of our union with him; of our remission of sins, regeneration, adoption, and life eternal. But our church does not mean, that the renovation of mind and spirit to real holiness by the operation of the holy spirit, is then actually effected and completed.—The *Cross after baptism*, is not designed as an act of worship to God, but as a visible profession of our faith in a crucified Saviour; it is not a dedicating or covenanting sign, which respects God, but at most, an engaging sign which respects the church. Besides it is no condition of communion, because the people are not required to sign with the sign of the cross, but the minister only.—But the parents are excluded from being *Sponsors*? But are they excluded also, from a full power, and released from their obligations, to breed up their children well? No, surely; and where then is the fault of the church, in taking the best care she can, that several other godly, wise, and grave christians, shall either assist the parent in the education of the child, or in case of the parent's death or neglect, take the whole care of it upon themselves? The pious Dr. Bray assures us "he has known many instances of persons, who owe that understanding they have of religion and the fear of God, purely next under God, to the care of their godfathers and godmothers.—As for the office of *Confirmation*, we are not said to be regenerated upon being able to say the catechism, &c. (as a sneering dissenter insinuates,*) but by water and the Holy Ghost, in baptism. Mr. Boyse calls confirmation "a very useful practice, and agreeable to the general rules of holy scripture."

* Towgood, p. 11.

Bishop Wetenhall* affirms, with respect to the *Office of visiting the sick*, that "it is well known divers of us have refused and daily do, to absolve such persons, touching whose penitence we are not satisfied;" and this he proves to be the sense of the rubric. And then, says Dr. Saywell, it is always understood to avail *clave non errante*, and the penitent is supposed to understand it will do him no good, unless his confession and repentance be sincere.—It is plain, says Dr. Bennet,† that the *Burial office* was never intended to be used at the burial of such persons, as die in a state of notorious impenitence, and if any clergymen use it at the funeral of such, they act against the manifest design of the church. Yet still this office is capable of a very charitable construction. There is no impropriety in saying, "that it pleased God to take unto himself the soul of our brother." For the wise man says of men in general, and consequently of the wicked, that at their death, the spirit returns to God who gave it, Ecc. 12. 7. The words "in sure and certain hope of the resurrection," mean, the general resurrection of all the dead; this is evident from the next sentence: "who shall change (not *his*) but *our* vile body; i. e. of us christians in general. By "eternal life," we mean an eternal life in general, whether in happiness or misery, as the life everlasting in the creed imports. The prayer, "that we may rest in him, as *our hope is*, (Towgood corrupts this into, *in the same manner*†) this our dear brother doth," is expressive of hopeful resignation of the deceased into the hands of God.—As for the laity, if any clergyman should through ignorance use this office improperly, it cannot be any objection against their coming to communion with the church. Every lay member is much at liberty to be absent from any particular funeral, as any lay dissenter can be.

I have now examined the Objections which have been brought against the liturgy, and I am persuaded that the most rigid dissenter will not say there is any thing absolutely *sinful* in these offices, and it is only in the use of some of these offices, that the laity are required to join. I am confident, says bishop Grove, that one man, without any great pains, may find more things really exception-

* Protestant peace-maker, p. 86.

† Bennet on com. prayer, 231.

‡ Second letter, p. 28.

able in any prayer made occasionally and extempore by the ablest of the opposite party, than the several parties of dissenters have been able to discover in the church service in more than an hundred years. And yet some of our brethren, that seek industriously for scruples in the common prayer, will readily join in other sudden conceived prayers, without any scruple; when they cannot tell but that there may be some dangerous heresy in every sentence, and some great indecencies and absurdities in every word. This is such partiality and unfair dealing as cannot easily be excused.*

The *Ceremonies* of our church, says dean Sherlock, have been often declaimed against, under the notion of "the doctrines and traditions of men:" but it is plain that neither our Saviour, nor St. Paul, meant any thing like them; for they do not speak of any circumstances or appendages of religious worship, but of such arbitrary superstitions, as they turned into formal acts of religion. The doctrines and commandments of men, which Christ casts out of his religion, were not any ceremonies or circumstances of worship, but some customs they took up, with a great opinion of their religion and *merit*; of these the papists have great numbers, as pilgrimages, penances, &c. And St. Paul tells us, with respect to such customs as these, that "the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost." i. e. that the christian religion does not consist in such sorry things, as eating or not eating such and such meats, but Christ expects from us true and sincere piety, as the only thing that can recommend us to God. Our acceptance with God depends upon nothing that is merely external, but on the devotion of the heart and soul, expressed in such becoming words and behaviour, as may make it visible and exemplary to others. and this is exactly the doctrine of our church. And if any man think that such external expressions of honour will please God, without the worship of the mind and spirit, they must answer for themselves; for she owns no such principles, but takes care to instruct her children better.†

It is a common objection of many ignorant people,

* Bishop Grove's persuasive to communion with the church of England; in Lond. cases.

† Sherlock's discourse of religious assemblies, p. 100.

that our edition prayer is popish, and taken out of the mass book. — But, are there in our liturgy, any prayers to saints or angels, or the Virgin Mary? Are our prayers concealed from us in an unknown tongue? Do we not understand what petitions we put up to God? Do you find the sacrifice of the mass, or any relics of it in our liturgy? Thanks be to God for our reformatting bishops and martyrs, who purged our worship from all these abominations. — Will it not be enquired, (says a convert from popery†) whether I be not gone from popery to popery, it being objected that the constitutions of this church are framed out of popery, and the common prayer taken from the mass book? I answer. The devil hath many devices to carry on his own interest, and the papists do contrive many engines to distract protestants; and I look upon this objection to be hammered in their forge, to make us worthy one another, and to break our communion. But let me tell you, that I think I understand the mass book better than any here, and can assure you the argument is vain and unworthy: first, all is not popery that is in the mass book; there are several parts of the primitive liturgy that is not popery. There are places taken out of the holy bible, neither is that popery: secondly, there are several other good things in the mass book; and if it were not so, the cheat would be evident to every eye. You know the devil tempted our Saviour in scripture language, shall we therefore expunge these scriptures, because the devil used them? the reformation quarrels not with the church of Rome for any thing that is good, but what is really bad. — I shall conclude this defence of our worship, with the following character of our liturgy, from a pamphlet entitled, *A serious call to a constant and devout attendance on the stated services of the church of England*; in an address from a clergyman to his parishioners, By the Rev. T. Robinson, vicar of St. Mary's Leicester, fourth edition, 1803.

The Form of Common prayer in which you are called to join, is truly excellent. It is venerable for its antiquity; it is justly to be admired for its style, being a model of simplicity, combined with dignity, and on that

* Sherlock, ib. p. 79. Bennet on Common prayer, 243.

† Recantation Sermon of Anthony Egas, late confessor general of Ireland, &c. Lond. 1673, p. 19.

aspect, well adapted to the purposes of devotion. Does a set formulary obstruct the influence of the holy Spirit, or necessarily render the service cold and unavailing? We know the contrary, and, in support of the assertion, could bring the attestation of many most lively and devout persons, both in past and present times. Our general wants are the same, and therefore the same general petitions are proper and expedient upon all occasions. We need not introduce any change of expression, or be continually seeking fresh matter for our public addresses to God; and if we should relinquish the use of our liturgy, it would not promote edification, or be a more acceptable service, in any material degree, to diversify our words. It may be no small advantage to the people, to know beforehand what are those supplications and thanksgivings, which they are called to offer up, with one heart and with one voice. And such a provision, as our church has made, is a security to the nation, that however the abilities or the principles of the officiating clergy may vary, there shall not be wanting in her temples, a form of sound words, with which her faithful members may cordially and profitably surround the throne of grace. This is a security of no small value, considering the probability that some of her ministers may be incompetent to conduct the worship by extemporaneous effusions, in a solid as well as lively and spiritual manner.

It is commended to your approbation, as being founded on evangelical principles. The essential doctrines of the gospel, established in the articles, are here most beautifully exhibited in a devotional application of them, and you are required to pray, as those that believe them. Do three divine and co-equal persons exist in the unity of the Godhead? The eternal majesty of each of these you acknowledge and adore, while you continually ascribe "glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. Is man a fallen, guilty, depraved, and helpless creature? You are taught to humble yourselves before God with deepest contrition and self-abhorrence, and to beseech his wrath, as those who deserve to perish, "O Lord have mercy upon us, miserable offenders!" Is there no other foundation laid for a sinners hope and confidence towards God, than Jesus Christ? The perpetual recurrence of his name throughout the liturgy, instructs you to offer up every petition through faith in him, and to make men-

tion of His righteousness only. Are the influences of the Spirit necessary, to form us to all right tempers and habits? On this ground you supplicate the Lord, "from whom all good things do come,"— "that by his holy inspiration you may think those things that be good, and by his merciful guiding may perform the same."

This, then, is a service which is adapted to the sentiments and desires of those who truly receive the gospel; and those grand peculiarities, which give offence to some, constitute its very essence, and are its highest excellence. Its petitions also are so spiritual, and conveyed in language so purely devotional, that though it encourages not the wild raptures of enthusiasts, it is calculated to kindle and keep alive the best and warmest affections of our hearts towards God, love, and zeal, and joy. If in our attendance upon it we are trifling and dissipated, the fault is altogether in ourselves, and no blame whatever can, on this account, attach to the liturgy. Are not similar effects found, where pre-composed prayers are not made use of? And is not the service of the church, if seriously regarded, well suited to prevent them? The frequent changes from prayer to praise, the intermixture of instruction in the reading of the holy scriptures, the various responses provided for the people, by which they are called upon to bear a part in the solemn worship, and the repeated admonitions addressed to them by their minister "let us pray,"—have a manifest tendency to fix and enliven the mind, or to recal the wandering thoughts, and raise the heart to God.

It is no inconsiderable advantage, that our Ritual contains within itself a course of scriptural and evangelical instruction, perfectly independent of sermons. Whenever we join in our forms of devotion, every grand and essential doctrine of christianity is brought before us, and we are required to renew the confession of our faith. Who then can plead ignorance? A judicious selection of the most interesting parts of the Old and New Testament is appointed to be read; so that the important declarations of Moses and the prophets, of Christ and his apostles, are constantly to be heard in our churches: and I hesitate not to say, that on this account, as well as others, it is a national blessing, maintaining and propagating truth, no less than promoting devotion. I most

cordially join with the venerable Hooker, "we dare not admit any such form of liturgy, as either appointeth no scripture at all, or very little, to be read in the church."

III. As for CHURCH GOVERNMENT,* our church hath not only a subordination of officers, which is necessary in all regular governments whatsoever; but it has the same officers, bishops and priests, both in name and authority, which are spoken of in scripture, which this church always had, and all churches that I can read of, ever had till of late—Under this government, I am in no doubt of the validity of the *ordinations* of our ministers, or of the validity of the *sacraments* by them administered. For we have our orders by a continued *succession* from the ancients, and so from the apostles, which is the only ordinary way that I know of, for a man to be commissioned to act in Christ's name. And therefore, for one of our nation, and born within the pale of our church, to separate himself from us, either from dislike of episcopacy, or on pretence of greater purity, I must needs think it to be a very dangerous practice. For I no more doubt there is such a sin as schism, than I doubt there is such a sin as murder—The offices of deans, archdeacons, and chapters, &c. are no orders in our church, but were introduced very early into it, for the more regular administration of affairs under the bishop.

Under this head I may consider the objection, that in our church the *people* are denied the liberty of *choosing* their own *pastors*, which has been lately asserted † to be their *inalienable* right. The instances adduced to prove this, are ‡ 1. the election of Matthias. Now Matthias was chosen as the other apostles were, by God himself. The 120 that nominated him and Barnabas, were not one fourth of the church; for this consisted at the time of our Saviour's resurrection, of 500 at least, 1 Cor. 15. 6. The eleven apostles and seventy disciples make eighty-one of this number; and granting that some of the laity were present, yet nothing can be urged for elections by

* Dean Stanley's Faith and Practice of a church, of England man, fifth edition, Dublin, 1733.

† M'Dowell's presb. gov. App.

‡ See Sherlock's *def. of Stillingeft*, p. 470 to 553, in answer to Baxter. Breviter's No democracy in the church, Dub. 1735. Dissenters represented, by T. Dorrington, late a dissenting teacher. Johnson's *Clergy vade mecum* pref. 59.

the laity, without any church officers in conjunction with them. Grotius himself will not allow that a popular election is inferred from this text; "*Maſiam a populo ad apoſtoli munus electum, minor quo argumẽto ſibi quidam perſuaſerunt, nam in Lucã nullum ejus rei invenio veſtigium.*" The ſecond inſtance, is the election of the ſeven deacons. It is true, the apoſtles leave the nomination of them to the people, whoſe treaſure they were to be entruſted with: but theſe deacons were not paſtors; the ſouls of the people were not to be intruſted with them; the Engliſh preſbyterians in their *Jus. div. min. evang. chr. S.* expreſs themſelves thus: * the people had not the whole and ſole choice of the deacons, but were herein guided and limited by the apoſtles; they were limited to the number of ſeven, to the company out of which they were to be choſen, and to certain qualifications in the ſeven. And we are confident that if the brethren had failed in any of theſe particulars, the apoſtles would have reſuſed to have laid hands on them."

* It is very manifeſt from the manner in which elections were performed in the time of the apoſtles, that the people's conſent was never conſidered as eſſential. Chriſt conſtituted his apoſtles without any imaginary appearance of a popular choice or approbation; and it is no inſignificant circumſtance to the preſent ſubject, that the catholic church was thus founded upon governors and paſtors ordained to rule over every part of it, before there was any formed congregation in the world to have any hand in it. The apoſtles never aſked the people's advice whom they ſhould ordain for paſtors, but created ſome of the moſt early converts "to be biſhops and miniſters of thoſe who ſhould hereafter believe."† The choice and approbation of biſhops and deacons in Ephesus and Crete, was committed by St. Paul to Timothy and Titus. And there is not the leaſt direction given to either of them, to call in the aſſiſtance or wait the approbation of the people in the caſe; but on the contrary, they had the ſtrongest cautions given them againſt popular election. For St. Paul, inſtructing Timothy in the genius of the people of the province in which he had placed him, in plain terms foretells, what they would one day do, if left to their own elec-

* Sleater's answer to Sir P. King, p. 90.

† Clem. ad Corinth. ep. 1.

tions, and liberty of choosing pastors for themselves: "The time will come, says he, when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears." And that Titus had a caution to this purpose, is evident from St. Paul, speaking of the Cretans, as "always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies." This is meant of the members of the church, for Titus is ordered to "rebuke them sharply, that they might be sound in the faith," which surely was to judge and censure them, for St. Paul disowns his right of judging them that are *without*. If the lay-members of the Cretan church then, had such a character given of them by the apostle himself, (which at least must affect a considerable part of them,) let any man judge what probability there is, that Titus should have had instructions to let the people choose their pastors, or that he should take up that method himself, in conferring holy orders on any in that island.

In succeeding ages, the presbyters appointed to cure, were, (with very few exceptions) chosen by the bishop. The bishops, in some places were chosen by the clergy, and in others by the people; but to prevent the acts of violence and even bloodshed, which were occasioned by the popular elections of bishops, the emperors were obliged to interpose, and nominate them themselves. And it is true, that the people's approbation has been always thought so far necessary, that when hands were to be laid on any for their admission into any sacred function, if they were known to be of a scandalous character, the people might object it, and by that means hinder their promotion, and this practice is still retained in our church. The nomination of the bishops of our church belongs to the prince, as being the founder and endower of the episcopal see.* But yet episcopacy is still the same, for it is not the nomination, but the ordination that makes the bishop. The prince's commission, only authorizes him to execute that authority within his dominions, in such a manner as may exempt him from the penalty of the temporal laws. But if the civil magistrate shall abuse his authority by preferring an unqualified person to

* In Sweden the archbishops and bishops are appointed by the king, and so are the bishops in Denmark. In other Lutheran countries, the superintendents are appointed by the prince and magistrates.

Bishopric, the bishops whom he orders to ordain such a person, ought to suffer any penalties rather than obey him.—Dr. Sherlock justly remarks: Though princes may be very bad themselves, it is so much their civil interest, to have a sober and learned clergy; to keep people in good order and government, that we have little reason to suspect, that they will lay a design to propagate vice and irreligion, which is the most likely way to undermine their own thrones. So there is more probability that princes and patrons, though bad themselves, should make good provision of able pastors, than a wild, giddy and factious people should.—As for the power of *nomination* in *inferior patrony*, it is justly thought to bear equal date with christianity in peace. For to give greater encouragement to the founding of churches in country places, the founder of any church, who settled an endowment upon it, was allowed to retain the right and presentation to himself, and to nominate a fit clerk to the bishop for his approbation. So that the right of patronage was at first founded upon a very reasonable consideration, and has been ever since received by an universal consent, as any law among us. And if patronages render our communion unlawful, it must be unlawful also to communicate with the Kirk of Scotland, where the vacant churches are filled, as here, by their proper patrons.

I would desire, says Dr. Sherlock, those who hold this principle, to consider, whether it is likely, that God who is the God of peace and order, should appoint such a way of *schism*, as in the very nature of it, considering the state of mankind in this world; must inevitably break the Church into 10,000 factions. For, let us suppose a vacancy in a congregation; who, in such a case, are the electors? Not the men *only* certainly; but also their wives, sons, daughters, &c. For have not each of these an inherent right to choose their own pastor? Well! the election is over, and how few can be said to have a pastor of their own choosing? A great part of the congregation, very near half, it may be, have a pastor *imposed* on them by the rest; one too, whom they did not *only not choose*, but have been violently struggling against. Therefore if these, (i. e. the minority,) choose another, they stand upon their own inherent right, which no authority of man

ought to invade or limit. If therefore they set up another meeting in the parish, and fix a new congregation there under their proper pastor, is there any remedy for it according to these principles? If he will not allow them to separate, what is become of the people's *inalienable* and *inherent* right? *Upon these principles*, it is almost impossible, that there ever should be a popular election without dividing the church; for it is next to impossible that five hundred persons, suppose, should every one consent in the same ministers. I am sure, continues Dr. Sherlock, it was otherwise in Dr. Seaman's church, which had not above thirty electors; and yet after prayer and fasting, and sermons to direct them in their choice, they divided into two churches, and chose two distinct pastors; and so they may do every week if they please, according to these principles, till every two or three of them make a church by themselves.

But let us suppose he was *unanimously* chosen; and we will suppose he lives among them twenty, thirty or forty years. But then, by this time, all his electors may be in their graves. What is it now that constitutes the relation between him and his present people; and makes him a pastor to them, more truly than the parish ministers is to others that are conformable, and would be to them, if they would only please to go to church, and duly attend on his ministrations. He is plainly not pastor of theirs; for he is no pastor of *their* choosing. He might be a pastor to their ancestors. But what is that to them? They had no more right to *impose* a pastor upon all that came after them, than any patron has to impose one upon the present inhabitants of the parish.

It is objected by some, "that our clergy lead immoral lives, and that therefore it is not safe to attend the service of the church."—Now, it must be remembered that the clergy are but men, and have their gifts in frail and earthly vessels. And were we to allow that their lives are not so irreproachable, as they ought to be; yet we must learn to distinguish between the man and his office, a bad man but a *legitimate* minister. And though he be unworthy of so holy a profession, yet the efficacy of his ministry does not at all depend upon his personal worth, but on the institution of Christ. To suppose it, would be to transfer the glory from God, to his weak instrument; as if any, the least part, of the divine virtue

which he has annexed to his sacraments, did proceed from his minister.* This distinction between the public and private character of the teacher, Christ has taught us to make in the direction given to his disciples, respecting their conduct towards the scribes and pharisees, who were at that time, notorious for moral depravity: "The scribes and pharisees sit in Moses seat, all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not after their works, for they say, and do not," This text, says Dr. Bennet, is so express and plain, that I have often wondered, how any person could imagine it to be unlawful to hear that clergyman preach, who leads a vicious life.—Judas received a commission from our Saviour to baptize, no less than the other apostles. And there can be no doubt that the baptism administered by him, was equally effectual with that administered by any other apostle. Yet we read that Judas was a devil. From whence it is to be observed that the power of divine grace, happily for mankind, is not limited by the pooriness of the instrument appointed to convey it, and that a ministerial act performed by proper authority, may be valid to the parties to whom it is applied, be the performer ever so unworthy. Just as a sentence or pardon passed by an immoral judge, are looked upon as valid, because the efficacy depends not upon the qualifications of the judge, but upon the sovereign authority from whence he receives his commission. Such is the principle laid down by our church in her twenty-third article, and was also the opinion of the old nonconformists.†

That the clergy of the church are not so exceptionable in their conduct, is confessed by a dissenting teacher of the present day: "I not only think, says he, that there may be good men and good ministers in the church, but that I have a much higher opinion of some of them, than of many among ourselves." And another dissenter acknowledges that "the established clergy are by no means deficient in talents, or in learning of any description. So far is this from being the case, that it is probable there

* See the review of Mitchell's presbyterian letters, in British critic, 1809. Daubeny's Guide, p. 67.

† London cases, vol. i. 201.

‡ Newton's corresp. with a diss. minister, 1809, p. 44.

§ Simpson's plea, 1807, p. 234.

never existed a body of men of the same number, who possessed equal natural and acquired qualifications.—It is the peoples fault, (says bishop Sillingsfleet*) if scandalous incumbents be not prosecuted, and the place supplied by better men.

As for *excommunication*, it is to be lamented that our church laws are not better enforced upon the clergy and laity. But I desire that this one great truth may be well considered, viz. That under the gospel dispensation, no man can receive pollution or injury from the sin of another person, unless he makes that sin his own, by joining in it; or favouring it, or some other similar method. Wherefore, how wicked soever the members of any church be, I shall not be answerable for their wickedness, if I am so far from joining in it, that I do whatsoever lies in my power to prevent or punish it.†

I have now examined the principal objections which are urged against communion with our church; and I think this should be no small satisfaction to men's minds, that the established worship has nothing contrary to the nature and design of christianity; from whence it follows, that men may be very good christians while they live in communion with our church; and then I doubt they cannot be very good christians when they forsake it: for nothing but apparent and manifest danger of sin can justify such a separation.

I shall now conclude with an exhortation to the members of our church from the sermons of the pious bishop Beveridge.—As for you who are members of the church, I humbly beseech and exhort you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that as he hath been pleased to admit you into so holy and pure a church; so you may all observe, what reason you have to continue steadfast in the communion of it; in which the word and sacraments are so powerfully and effectually administered;

* Becks, cases, and canon 42 and 61 of church of Ireland.

† For a full answer to this plea which has been lately reviewed by Mr. J. Walker, I refer the reader to Allen's Catholicism, either printed separately, or in his works, and Lamb's Fresh suit against Independency. These books may be found in Trin. College Library, the former in G. G. 16. 15. page 489, and the latter in G. G. 22. 38. For further information on this head, consult Thomas's apology, Ball against Canne, Cawdry against Hooker, &c.

said not to *assist* from her either into *prayer* on the
 one hand, or *anabaptism* on the other. For, as for *prayer*,
 although the apostolic succession hath been continued in
 the church of Rome, yet they have most egregiously
 abused it; having clogged the several offices with so
 many superstitious ceremonies, that they quench the spi-
 rit, which should enliven and quicken them, or else per-
 form them so imperfectly, that they are not the same
 that were instituted by Christ, and so not capable of
 having this promise fulfilled to them. * I shall only in-
 stance in two; the reading of the scriptures, and the
 sacrament of the Lord's supper. As for the first, the public and solemn reading of
 the word of God, by a minister lawfully ordained, and
 appointed thereto, I look upon it as amongst the
 most useful and prevalent means of grace, that we do
 or may enjoy. Because the same spirit, which indit-
 ed the scriptures, accompanies such solemn reading of
 them; and sits in haste upon the hearts and consciences
 of them that hear it. But now in the church of Rome
 this is all lost. For although they read the scriptures
 indeed, yet they read them as they do their prayers in
 an unknown tongue; so lost to the greatest part of
 the congregation, and commonly to the very reader
 himself. By which means the people are deprived, not
 only of the scriptures themselves, but likewise of the
 assistance of God's spirit, which otherwise would accom-
 pany them. The same reason holds good also as to
 the sacrament of the Lord's supper, as administered by
 the Romish church. For the whole office is wraps up in
 a language the people do not understand, and therefore
 know not what the priest saith, nor whether he consecrate
 the host or no; only they see him perform a great many
 ceremonies, as unintelligible as the language he speaks.
 And at length he puts a wafer into their mouths. Now
 what is there in all this, that the spirit of God can make
 use of to the comfort and edification of the people? I
 do not see how the promise of the spirit can belong
 to the sacrament, as they manage it. For the promise
 of Matt. 28. 20. "I am with you all ways, even to the
 end of the world." The first part of this text, is very remark-
 able, "teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have
 commanded you."

is not made to any one part of it, as distinct from the other, but to the whole, as it was instituted by Christ. And where the institution is not rightly observed, neither can the promise annexed to it be performed. But it is plain, that our Saviour instituted the cup as well as the bread. And it is as plain, that the church of Rome administers the bread only and not the cup. And therefore they, by depriving the people of one half of the communion, do thereby deprive them of the comfort of the whole. And therefore were there no other, as there are many arguments to deter sober and considering men from the communion of that church, this, one would think, is of itself sufficient to do it; even because those great means of grace, the word and sacrament itself, are so administered by it, as to be made of no use at all to the people.

And, as for *schism*, they certainly hazard their salvation at a strange rate, who separate themselves from such a church, as ours is, wherein the apostolic succession, the root of all christian communion, hath been so entirely preserved, and the word and sacraments are so effectually administered; and all who go into such assemblies and meetings, as can have no pretence to the great promise in my text.

For it is manifest that this promise was made only to the apostles and their successors to the end of the world. Whereas in the private meetings, where their teachers have no apostolic or episcopal imposition of hands, they have no ground to pretend to succeed the apostles, nor by consequence any right to the spirit which our Lord here promises; without which, although they preach their hearts out, I do not see what spiritual advantage can accrue to their hearers by it.—Upon these therefore and such like considerations, I humbly advise and beseech you all in the name of Christ your Saviour, and as you tender your salvation by him, that you would not hearken unto those who go about to seduce you from our church, but that you would continue firm and faithful to it. For so long as you do, I dare undertake for you, that you are in the ready way to heaven. But if you once forsake that, whither you will next go, I know not, nor you neither.*

* I dare answer, says archbishop Sharp, for the salvation of all those who continuing in our church, live up to the prin-

But when I speak of your continuing firm and faithful to the church, I do not mean that you should only talk high for her, much less inveigh against her adversaries, or damn all those who are not of her communion: for this is contrary to the divine and apostolic spirit that is in her, which is a spirit of meekness and soberness and charity. But my meaning is that you firmly believe whatsoever she, from the word of God, propounds as an article of faith, and faithfully perform whatsoever she, from the same word requires, as a necessary duty to God or man, and by consequence so live in the communion of our church, as to live up to the rules and constitutions of it.—In a word, be but as conformable to her, as she is to the catholic church, and my life, my eternal life for yours, you cannot but be happy for evermore. Which God of his infinite mercy grant we may all be, in and through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

rites of it. But I dare answer nothing for them, who, being brought up in this church, and having so great opportunities given them of knowing the truth, do yet depart from it. I pray God, they may be able to answer for themselves."

APPENDIX.

As there are some objections to, and misrepresentations of the constitution of our church, which are common in the mouths of many ignorant people, but which even if true, cannot in the least affect the consciences of the laity, nor hinder their communicating with the church, I have resolved to examine them in this appendix, and prove with what little reason they have been hitherto objected against us.

The first relates to the *power* of the church, in *prescribing the particular circumstances of religious worship*.*—Now it is a general law of God, that whatever belongs to his worship, should be done *decently* and in *order*, 1 Cor. 14. 40. "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints." But Christ has no where particularly set down or appointed the several rules and circumstances, which of

* On this head, consult Dr. Sherlock's excellent *Vindication of the rights of ecclesiastical authority*, 1683. Clagett's reply to Alsop on *misch. of impositions*, 1691. *Answer to Delaune's plea*, by Mr. Robertson late a dissenting teacher, with a letter to Dan. Foe, 1710, p. 21, and Hart's answer to Delaune, 1717. William Law's 2d and 3d letter to the bishop of Bangor. Bingham's French church's apology for the church of England, b. 2. c. 3, 4, 5.

decency must concur to make up this *decorum* and *order*, which is thus in general prescribed; and yet no religious action can be performed without some circumstances or other. For example he has commanded us to pray to God in his name, to commemorate his death and passion in his last supper; &c. but how often we must pray, and eat his heavenly feast, in what place, in what posture, at what time, &c. he has not told us. Either then every particular man is entirely left to his own liberty; as to all the circumstances of every part of God's worship; which unavoidably produces *disorder* and *confusion*, and therefore decency and order cannot be maintained; or else there must be somewhere a power in the church, to settle these circumstances, as shall be found necessary for the preservation of decency and regularity.

Therefore we may well conclude, that our Saviour left all such to the order and direction of his apostles and their successors in all ages, as may tend most to the preservation of order; and the edification of the church. And as they ought not to impose any thing that is burdensome upon the people; however otherwise it may perhaps be lawful; so when they have made any rules concerning these matters, it is certainly the duty of the people, rather "to obey and conform themselves," Heb. 13. 17. unto them, than to hazard the breach of the churches peace for such things as are in their own nature indifferent; and consequently alterable whenever there appears good reason for it.—In this, the christian church enjoys that liberty which the Jewish church had not; it is set at liberty by Christ from the yoke of bondage, Gal. 5. 1. and therefore is not under servile restraints, as the Jewish church was, but has the government of its own actions, according to the general rules of the gospel.

But it is objected "that the use of any custom not commanded by Christ, is a reflection on the defectiveness of Christ's institution."—But are there no additions among discourses themselves? For instance, in the communion, Christ only commanded us to eat this bread, and drink wine in remembrance of him. Not in this particular posture, or at this particular time; nor did he institute

* See epist. to Timothy and Titus. Bishop Potter on Church government, p. 331.

days of preparation and thanksgiving, nor tickets for admittance to the communion, (without which, no one is admitted to the Lord's supper among presbyterians,) nor did he appoint prayers at the celebration of it, or of baptism. Every prayer which is used, is a reflection upon Christ's institution, without which the sacrament is as complete as with it, and without one word of which, Christ instituted it. But the truth is, neither the practice of these dissenters nor the practice of our church, represents the institution of Christ any more defective, than he designed it. For all these circumstances he left to be determined by church governors, according to the rules of decency and order.

It is objected, "that for the same reason the church may impose some ceremonies, she may impose more; who knows where the impositions may end?"—Answer. It is no argument against compliance in any particular case, that we cannot fix the bounds of it, any more than it is against the practice of any other christian virtue. For instance, it is hard to determine exactly, what proportion of my estate I am obliged to bestow in alms; therefore I am not obliged to bestow any part of it; and on this principle, subjects and servants may refuse obedience to the most harmless commands of their masters and princes. Our church has professed most solemnly against the multiplication of ceremonies, in the preface to the common prayer; and it is observable that even at the restoration, (1660,) when it was much more in the will and power of churchmen, than ever it is likely to be again, there was not one single ceremony added to the church worship; which observation is sufficient to silence this mighty fear about ceremonies. But the *true way* of arguing against compliance, is to prove that the particular instances in which we are called to comply, are such as it is unbefitting a christian to comply with, either for their *number* or *quality*; (for kneeling at the communion is the only ceremony in which the laity are concerned)—Nothing but this, can take off our obligation to the great duty of compliance, and therefore the objection I am considering is of no force for that purpose.

It is objected again, "that this is making new terms of communion, and is an encroachment upon Christ's

authority."—This objection can easily be retorted. For let us suppose that the major part of a dissenting congregation, agree upon the use of a liturgy. Now does not this manifestly exclude the *scrupulous* from communicating in that congregation, in which they have as great a right as their neighbours; and consequently is a confining to one sort of christians, what their common master hath left open to all. It is as truly an addition to Christ's institution, who left it without such an incumbance, and consequently an invasion of that authority which he alone is said to enjoy. To say that the scrupulous may go to another congregation more to their mind, does not remove the present difficulty, for they have a right to be admitted in this very congregation, upon the naked terms of Christ himself: why should they either put themselves to great inconveniencies, by hunting after other congregations more agreeable to themselves, or, by giving up their own right, encourage an imposing spirit, and ecclesiastical tyranny, in those who have no authority for what they do? Should their scruples be removed with respect to the lawfulness of the liturgy agreed upon, they are still obliged upon these principles, not to comply so far, as to use constantly the form agreed upon by others. For how do they know how many other impositions may be brought in at this rate? How can they answer the giving countenance to the least additions to Christ's institutions? This compliance would be an acknowledgement of authority in the * major part of the congregation to make such an agreement, and how could they acknowledge this, without giving up all right in themselves to be admitted upon other terms? Shall they give up this right for the sake of peace? No, such a compliance tends to slavery and church tyranny, and peace is not to be procured at so dear a price.—Thus might this cause be argued upon such principles, and the same objections brought against this scheme, as is brought against compliance with the church, and so a perpetual foundation laid of quarrels and animosities amongst neighbours. We must conclude, either that there cannot be any particu-

* If the crime lies merely in making terms of communion not enjoined in scripture, it is impossible the right to this should be in the major part of the congregation, any more than in the governors of the church. See Hoadley's Reasonab. of conformity, against Calamy, 3d. edit. 1719, p. 525.

far scheme invented, which will be wholly free from what are called unscriptural additions; or that until such a scheme be found, we may very well adhere to the church. I now proceed to some other objections.

They plead that "their separation from the church, is no more than a separation from a *human establishment*; for that the church of England has no foundation but upon the king and parliament."—* If our church has no foundation but upon the king and parliament, then certainly it is not founded upon the authority of Christ, and consequently it is no church of Christ.† But will any man say, that a national church, being a member of the catholic church of Christ, ceases to be such, when adopted as a part of the constitution, and established by the civil power? Suppose it were persecuted by the civil power, and its ministers and worship were proscribed; would it therefore cease to be a church of Christ? certainly not: for the church of the Hebrews in Egypt, was still the church of God, though the people were under a cruel edict not to serve him; and God owned it as such, and delivered it last. Do the powers of this world unmake the church by their reception of it, when they do not by their persecution of it? Doth its bishops and priests cease to be bishops and priests? Do its sacraments cease to be sacraments? Doth its discipline cease to be christian discipline, and lose its authority, because the state admits of it and establishes it? I say, suppose they were to declare against all these things, as the Heathens and Jews did in the first ages of the gospel, their declaration would signify nothing: because the church, in its priesthood and sacraments, derives its authority only from Jesus Christ, which the persecution of the civil powers cannot reach; much less can their allowance turn it into an human authority, and render it of none effect.—Yet if this

* Jones's essay on the church, and answer to Tasker.

† Leave the ceremonies, *the stone of stumbling*, indifferent, and the separation is at an end," says Towgood, lett. 2. p. 83, and p. 1, and lett. 3. 94, and Tasker, rep. to White. So then if these indifferent things were removed, the dissenters would communicate with a church which is "no church of Christ" (Towg. 1 letter 80.) These objections are so inconsistent, that they leave ~~no~~ ^{no} ~~chance~~ ^{chance} of the possibility of a reconciliation with such men.

argument had any force, it would also prove that every dissenting congregation is no church of Christ, because;
 * says lord Mansfield, "it is *established*, it is put under the protection, and is not merely under the connivance of the law." And Dr. Campbell, a late presbyterian teacher at Armagh, informs Dr. Stock "that he might have known, that there are two established churches in England and Ireland, and that the *dissenters* mode of worship is *established*." Of this privilege the author of the Palladium,† boasts, "the dissenter says he has *equally* a *legal right* to worship God in his own way, as the conformist has; and is *equally* under the *protection* of the state.

They plead again that "the act of toleration has given a sanction to their separation and taken away the sin of it." This plea is a manifest contradiction to the other. For they argued that our church ceases to be a church of Christ, because it acts under the allowance of the civil power. Yet in their own case, the civil power can make schism to be no schism; and thus they give to the civil power the privilege of God himself, who only can forgive sin.

It is a very false suggestion, that our civil government can alter the church at its pleasure. The church of England, (says Dr. Elaget, in answer to Manby and Ward's queries) is at present the church established by law; and if you ask, whether the church of England with respect to the *legal establishment* of it, be not changeable according to the various inclinations of English parliaments, then without all doubt English parliaments may change the church of England; but we hope they will not do it. But if by changing the church of England, you mean, that parliaments can make the religion professed by the church of England, to become a false religion; when their inclinations are on one side from us; then I tell you, that the church of England is *unalterable* by English parliaments, nor by all the powers upon earth. For this matter is fixed to their hands, and can never be altered to the end of the world. We of this church depend upon king and parliament, for the *legal establishment*.

* Speech in the case of A. Evans, Gent. Mag. 1771.

† Exam. of bishop of Clermont, p. 140 and 141.
 in a p. 140 and 141.
 in a p. 140 and 141.
 in a p. 140 and 141.
 in a p. 140 and 141.

token of our religion; but not for the *truth* of it; the former therefore is changeable, because men are so; but the latter is not so, because God changeth not. Thus we render unto Caesar, the things that are Caesar's, and unto God, the things that are God's.

I shall now briefly explain the nature of our church as established by law. It has already been proved, that there were certain powers, exercised by bishops in the primitive church, which were of *divine institution*, and never subject to any change or alteration; and the principal of these powers, were besides preaching and administering the sacraments, ordination, confirmation and excommunication. Besides these, there were others derived from the *customs and constitutions* of the church within herself: of these it is unnecessary at present to mention any more, than, 1. That they frequently met in synods to consult concerning the common faith, and agree upon proper measures to preserve the unity of the church. 2. That every bishop had the management of the public revenue, to distribute from thence the portions to the clergy. 3. Appointing to churches their particular pastors. This was as to its principal parts, the nature of the episcopal office in the christian church, as long as it continued without any support from the civil power: but afterwards, when the Roman emperors became christians, there was every where formed throughout the empire, a coalition or union between the spiritual and temporal state: and this union seems plainly to have been formed upon these foundations: 1. That all powers exercised by bishops, and by the public officers in the church, by virtue of any *divine institution*, were in their full extent continued to them. 2. That all other matters, which were not fixed by a *divine law*, but were necessary for the sake of order and good government in the church, were to be settled by the *direction* and approbation of the *civil power*.

That this was in *fact* the case, is evident from the christian emperors convening councils, and their edicts in ecclesiastical matters; and that it ought of *right* to be so, is manifest, not only because it was exercised by

* Dr. Turner on Eccl. authority 1717. Blett's Indep. of church on state 1717. Synge's Constitution of the Church, &c. 1723.

godly princes among the Jews; but also because the christian law does most expressly require, "that every soul (as well bishops and presbyters, as laymen,) should be subject to the higher powers, "in all things not repugnant to the law of God. It is also evident from the prophecy of Isaiah, 49. 23. "kings shall be thy nursing fathers and queens thy nursing mothers; they shall bow down to thee with their face towards the earth;" &c. And what can be plainer from thence, than that kings and queens should protect and defend the church from all outward injury and violence; and should bow down before the guides and governors of it, to receive the word and sacraments at their hands. D. Neal, author of the history of the Puritans, confesses, that "kings and princes may be protectors of the church, and defenders of its faith from oppression and violence, within their dominions."*

In this manner, a friendly union between the spiritual and temporal powers was happily formed in all christian states, which was tolerably well preserved to the common advantage of both, till the time of the papal usurpation. However, says Dr. Brett, the pope, the grand corrupter of christianity, taking upon him, under pretence of maintaining the independence of the church, to exempt some causes and some persons from all civil jurisdiction to the princes, gave the princes a just occasion to reject this usurped power. And at the reformation, divers princes and states, and ours among the rest, not able to bear these usurpations and encroachments, found it necessary to shake off the papal yoke; and because the pope had strained the matter too high on the churches side, this made our princes judge it necessary to secure themselves from those invasions, and might have carried them a little too far into the opposite extreme, of raising the civil power too high.

It is a common practice with papists and others, to bring together many acts of parliament, with their pompous preambles, that seem to carry the *kings power* in ecclesiastical matters to a very indefinite degree, as if this alone was sufficient to blast our whole reformation. But,

* Sermons against popery, at Saffordham, 1738, p. 141.
Brett on church gov. p. 22, 1710.

says bishop Burget, "it is very unreasonable to urge these general expressions, or some stretchers of the royal supremacy, and not to consider that more strict explanation that was made of it, both in the time of K. Henry VIII. and under Q. Elizabeth. In K. Henry's time, the extent of the king's supremacy was defined in the Necessary Education of a christian man, that was set forth as the standard of doctrine at that time.† In this it is plainly said, that with relation to the clergy, the king is to oversee them, and to cause that they execute their pastoral office truly, and faithfully, and especially in those points which by Christ and his apostles were committed to them." And to this, it is added "that bishops and priests are bound to obey all the king's laws, *not being contrary to the law of God.*" And also a reserve, "of all that authority which was committed by Christ and his apostles, to the bishops and priests."

Yet because the term, *Head of the church*, seemed harsh, there was yet a more express declaration made under Q. Elizabeth, which must be considered as the true measure of the supremacy, and the wide expressions in the former laws must be understood to be restrained by this, since posterior laws derogate from those that were first made. So that according to all this, the king's supremacy "doth not give to our princes the ministering either of God's word or of the sacraments. But only that prerogative, which we see to have been given always to all godly princes in holy scriptures, by God himself; that is, that they should rule all estates and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be ecclesiastical or temporal, and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and the evil doers." Art. 37.

The title of supreme head of the church, says Dr. Brett, was repealed by Elizabeth, and never since revived; for Q. Elizabeth contented herself with the title of *supreme governor* of this realm, &c. And it is manifest from the thirty-seventh article that this supremacy is

* Reflections on relation of the reformation, and Oxford Theses, against Walker, Amst. 1688. Bishop Burnet's answer to do. 1688. Heylin's Way of reformation of church of England, in his tracts. Atterbury's Rights of convocation, p. 179 to 206, second edition.

† Falkner's christian loyalty, p. 83. 1670. Grey's answer to Pierce's vind. p. 6, 1720.

so other than a civil power,* and not that spiritual power which Christ communicated to his apostles, and derived from them to the bishops and pastors of the church. And I have often wondered how so many learned men have to this day, continued to give this title of head of the church to our princes, since neither our laws, nor our canons do at that time, nor have these 250 years given them this title.

This, (says bishop Burnet, speaking of the thirty-seventh article) is all that supremacy which we are bound in conscience to own; and if the letter of the law, or the stretch of that in the administration of it, have carried this further, we are not at all concerned in it: but in case any such thing were made good, it could amount to no more than this, that the civil power had made some encroachments on ecclesiastical authority; but the submitting to an oppression, and the bearing it, till some better times may deliver us from it, is no argument against our church; on the contrary, it is a proof of our temper and patience, and of that respect we pay to that civil authority which God hath set over us, even when we think it passeth its bounds.

As long then as the church enjoys a protection from the civil authority, she is bound to make returns of all engagements, not only of submission but of obedience; but though the one is perpetual, the other has its limits; and when the church finds its oppressions from the civil power really to overbalance the protection that she receives from it, in that case she must resolve to fall into a state of persecution; and all the engagements that any body of the clergy have made, relating only to the maintaining a peaceable correspondence with the civil power, they do not at all bind up churchmen, from doing their duty, in case the civil authority sets itself to overthrow religion. And it is acknowledged by Dr. Wake,† (who it is well known, carried the power of the prince in church affairs, to a very high pitch,) that “should we ever be so unhappy as to be denied all liberty of convocations, though the governors and fathers of the church should with all their care and interest endeavour to obtain it; should the prince so far abuse his prerogative, as to turn it not only to the detriment, but to the ruin of all true religion and mora-

* Bishop Bramhall's, answer to Militere, works, p. 25.

† State of the church &c. ch. 9. sect. 12.

SECOND PART.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Unity of the Catholic Church.

In the former part of this treatise, I have explained the true notion of the *catholic church*, (p. 8.), and stated the essentials of *Faith, Worship, and Discipline*, in which the particular churches into which the catholic church is divided, hold communion with each other. I shall now show in *what manner* this communion is preserved by different churches.*

Now the first grand principle of catholic unity is, that ALL BISHOPS are *originally* of *equal* POWER; and we esteem every bishop, with his college of presbyters and deacons, and the laity of his district, to be a PARTICULAR CHURCH, wherein the bishop presides, as representing the person of Christ, and to be the principle of unity in his church, as St. Ignatius speaks.—So that the *unity of particular churches*, consists in obedience to their bishop; and in the communion of all the members of it in all acts of worship and discipline; and those

* See Sheslock's *Wind. of some protestant principles of church unity*, 2d. edit. 1688.—Barrow on the *unity of the church*, Works, vol. 1. p. 772.—Bingham's *antig. book* 16. ch. 8.—b. 2. c. 5, 6, 16.—b. 16. c. 1. sect. 6.—Pres. ag. popery, tit. 4, p. 67, and appendix, p. 95.—Archb. Sharp's *sermons*, vol. 7, p. 90.—Leslie's answer to bp. of Meaux. Works 1. 575.

who separate from the external visible communion of the church wherein they live, without necessary and unavoidable reasons, are schismatics, who cut themselves off from the body of Christ.

Hence all particular churches, that is, every bishop with his proper flock, make up the whole, which is THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. So that the *unity of the catholic church* consists not in the *subjection* of one church to another, but in the profession of the same faith, and in the *agreement* and *concord* of their bishops, in owning each others churches, and maintaining communion with them upon catholic principles, and governing their churches, as far as is expedient, by common rules of worship and discipline.

To maintain and regulate this concord and correspondence of the bishops among themselves, it is very expedient and in some degree necessary, that neighbouring bishops (as the bishops of the same province or nation,) should unite into an ecclesiastical body, and govern their churches by mutual consent.

When therefore several bishops, who have originally all the *same authority* in the government of their several churches, bestow different powers on some bishops, whom they advance above others, with the title and authority of Metropolitans, or Patriarchs, with a power of calling synods, receiving appeals, &c. and govern their several churches by such ecclesiastical laws as are agreed on by common consent, this is a very useful constitution and of great antiquity in the church; but if such associations degenerate from their first institution, and by the tyranny and encroachments of some usurping bishops, are turned into a temporal monarchy, and invasion upon the inherent rights and liberties of all other bishops and churches, I would desire to know why these oppressed bishops and churches may not vindicate their own rights and liberties, and cast off such an intolerable yoke? And the reason is plain, because all *human* constitutions are alterable; and what is alterable, ought to be altered when the indispensable necessities of the church require it.

The unity of the catholic church then, consists in one faith and worship and charity; and such an external communion, when occasion offers, shows that we are all the disciples of the same Lord, and own each other for

brethren ; but the church may be the *one body* of Christ, without being *one ecclesiastical body* under one governing head, which it is impossible the whole christian church should ever be ; therefore if divisions happen among bishops and churches of the same ecclesiastical body, they may both continue true churches still. For they are united to Christ by the true faith, worship and discipline, and if the contending churches may both retain these, the external peace of the church is broken, which is a very great crime and will fall heavy upon the *authors* of it ; yet still they may be united in Christ's mystical body, and remain parts of the catholic church.

Thus, the communion of the church of Rome was denied to the churches of Asia in Victor's time, and to the churches of Africa and Asia in St. Cyprian's days ; thus, the differences between the eastern and the western churches, &c. yet both of these divided communions remained parts of the catholic church ; but to appropriate the title of the one catholic church to any one of the divided parties, so as to exclude the rest, was to be guilty of the same presumption with the Novatians and Donatists, and was as much the cause of the schisms, which happen thereupon in the church, as they were.

But if a church has *just and necessary reasons* for dividing itself from that ecclesiastical body, to which it once belonged, it is wholly blameless, nay, commendable for doing so ; therefore whatever jurisdiction or primacy is pretended to have been formerly granted by ancient councils to the bishop of Rome, may be retrenched or denied without the guilt of schism when it swells into a boundless and unlimited authority, to the oppression of the whole christian church in her essential rights and liberties, and serves only to justify and perpetuate the most notorious and intolerable corruptions of the christian religion*.

* As for *General Councils*, there is no necessity of them to catholic communion ; the christian churches were from the beginning one, and maintained a very strict alliance with each other, for above three hundred years without them : and catholic communion was better preserved then, than ever it has been since, which is a demonstration that such a supreme governing power over the whole church is not necessary to catholic communion, for then catholic communion could never have been maintained.

But the Romanists pretend that it is *essential* to catholic communion to be *subject* to the *monarch* of *Rome*, as the universal head and monarch of the church. "We define," says their general council of Florence, that the holy apostolic see and bishop of Rome is invested with the *primacy* over the *whole world*, and that the bishop of Rome is the successor of St. Peter, *prince* of the apostles, and that he is the *true vicar* of Christ, and *head* of the *whole church*, and the *father* and *doctor* of *all christians*, and that the *full power* of *feeding, ruling, and governing* the *whole church* was given to him in St. Peter, by our Lord Jesus Christ, as it is expressed or contained in the acts of general councils, and in the holy canons.

* This then being the *true* state of their doctrine concerning their pope's power or supremacy, and that which I would call *naked popery*, I am sure I have a commission from the church of England to declare, that she cannot, without *betraying the rights* of all bishops, and the interest of the catholic church, espouse the doctrine of the bishop of Rome's supremacy; which we of her communion do believe is altogether without *foundation*, either from *scripture* or *primitive antiquity*.

CHAP. IX.

The supremacy of the bishop of Rome, confuted from the Scriptures.

Now the bishop of Rome claims a supremacy over the whole christian church, because it is pretended that our Saviour made the apostle St. Peter, the head and supreme governor of the whole church. This we deny, having undeniable proofs that ALL the APOSTLES were placed by Christ in EQUAL POWER and AUTHORITY over

without it; and yet, thus it was in St. Cyprian's time, who was as zealous an assertor of catholic communion, as any before or since.

* Dr. Gee's vindication of answer to Nubes Testium, 1688.

his church.—The arguments on which St. Peter's pretended supremacy and authority over the other apostles is founded, are of two kinds. 1. Such words of Christ as seem to imply or give this authority. 2. Some great privileges granted to St. Peter.*

I. Such words of Christ as seem to imply or give this power; and these are two texts of scripture, viz. Matth. 16. 18, 19. John 21. 15.

St. Matthew relates, that upon St. Peter's having confessed our Saviour to be the Son of God; Christ said to him, "thou art Peter, and upon this rock, I will build my church, &c. and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven."—Now were we to consider this passage by itself, without adverting to what is its proper comment, the subsequent conduct of Peter, and the other apostles, yet even then it would be difficult to contend, that our Lord's saying was to be applied exclusively to Peter. For the question which led to this, was put to *all* the apostles, and Peter when he answered, must, according to fair construction, be considered as answering in the name of all. † There is nothing particular to Peter, but that he is addressed by name, and that to his name our Lord makes an immediate allusion. As to what is meant by the word "rock," which the Romanists interpret as making Peter the gover-

* Bishop Patrick's exam. of texts for supremacy—and his Sermon on St. Peter's day, against Godden, 1688. Dr. Stratford's discourse of the pope's supremacy, part 1. (in answer to St. Peter's supremacy discussed by Cleuch, and Godden's Sermon,) 1688. Le Mesurier's Bampton lectures, 1803, p. 174. Gee's answer to Nubes testium, 1688, and Collins's defence of bishop Andrews's Tortura Torti, 1617.

† Petrus, super quem edificata ecclesia unus *pro omnibus loquens*, et ecclesie vice respondens, Cyprian, Ep. 55. and this he explains in another place, "inde per temporum et successionum vices episcoporum et ecclesie decurrit, ut ecclesia super episcopos constitutus, et omnis actus ecclesie per eosdem prepositos gubernetur." From these words spoken to Peter, he infers not a jurisdiction given to him, and his successors, but a government resting upon all bishops equally. Austin's words are, "cui ecclesie figuram gerenti dixit dominus, super hanc, &c. Ep. 53. Jerom's are "Petrus personam omnium apostolorum profitetur," in loc: and afterwards when speaking of giving the keys, he applies it not at all to Peter, but to the bishops in general.

nor of the church; it may be sufficient to say, that very few of the fathers interpret it as applying to Peter. The famous M. Launoy, Dr. of the Sorbonne, has collected near fifty sentences from the fathers, in which the rock is applied not to Peter, but to *Christ*, or the *faith confessed concerning Christ*, which come to the same thing. So that if the interpretation of above fifty fathers and church writers, among whom there are 11 pope's and 2 synods, be admitted against that of 3 or 4 fathers, we are sufficiently secured, that the interpretation of the rock, being the faith confessed by Peter concerning Christ, (which is espoused by the church of England,) is true and catholic, and that to interpret it of Peter's person, is to contradict the stream of catholic antiquity.

I shall produce two passages omitted by Launoy, to show that that excellent person has not exhausted the subject. Epiphanius (adv. hæc. lib. 2. p. 500. 1622.) brings in our Saviour saying to Peter, "that upon this rock of unshaken faith, I will build my church. St. Chrysostom (Sermo de pent. tom. 6. 233.) tells us that our Saviour said, "upon this rock, not upon Peter, for he built his church not upon the man Peter, but upon the faith" which he confessed. And were this opinion erroneous, yet it decidedly proves that at the time when the fathers wrote, that is, for 4 or 5 centuries after Christ, no such doctrine as this of the supremacy of Peter, was known in the church.

But *supposing Peter* to be the *rock*, yet what resemblance is there between a rock and a governor? Can our adversaries produce any instance, in which a supremacy of power was ever conferred, by comparing any person to a rock. And as cardinal Cusanus argues, "if Peter was a foundation, all the apostles were equally foundation stones," John 21.—Eph. 2. 20.

As for the other promise, that, "the keys, and the power of binding and loosing;" (which are the same according to Bellarmin, and the Roman catechism,) should be given to Peter, we find that it was actually conferred on all the 12 apostles, to whom Christ bestowed it, without any distinction, John 20. 21, 23. In this text the words are spoken to the apostles, without any preference of Peter before the meanest of them. And accordingly when the Holy Ghost descended, it was im-

parted to each of them alike without any mark of distinction, Acts 2. 3, 4. So that if we may explain our Lord's promise by its completion, what is promised to Peter by name, (because he had then spoken for them all, in answer to Christ's question proposed to the whole company,) was equally promised to all the rest.—If it be said, that there was something extraordinary conferred on Peter in this text, and that the other apostles did not receive this power till a short time before our Saviour ascended; I answer, that in the next chapter but one, our Saviour speaks to all the apostles as already invested with the power of the keys, Mat. 18. 17, 11; and this is agreeable to the opinion of the fathers, "who (as Dupin confesses, De. eccl. antiq. discip. dissert. 4. c. 1.) say with an unanimous consent, that the keys were given to the whole church in the person of Peter." "St. Austin" particularly "inculcates this an hundred times" (as his words are); a proof of which may be seen in the epistles of Launoy, (ep. 73.) who has collected 26 places out of St. Austin's works, to show that he taught this "openly, frequently and constantly."

I cannot forbear to mention one of them, says bishop Patrick, * because it affords us many considerable remarks: "as some things, (says Austin, Enarr. in psal. 108.) are spoken which may seem properly to belong to the apostle Peter, and yet have not a clear sense, but when they are referred to the church, whereof he is acknowledged to have represented the person in a figure, (because of the primacy, he had among the apostles); as that is, "I will give thee the keys," and if *there be any like*: so Judas sustains, after a certain manner, the person of the Jews, the enemies of Christ, &c." Here the Romanists are very forward to catch at these words, which signify a place of *priority*, that Peter had among the Apostles, (which no one denies,) but are not willing to take any notice of the rest; which entirely overthrow that primacy, they would advance him unto from this place. For 1. he says some things, but *seem* to belong to Peter, which in truth ought to be referred to the church. 2. That their sense is *not clear*, till they be

* See also Dr. Collins's Epphata to F. T. 1617. p. 12. in which St. Austin's opinion is fully explained.

carried beyond him. Among which things, 3. he reckons what Christ here says "I will give thee the keys," which Austin says are not plain, unless we refer them to the church. Whose person, 4. he says he represented not by virtue of any authority he had above the rest, but *in a figure*, to signify unity, as the ancients interpret it. And it is further remarkable, 5. that Christ did not promise him the primacy in promising him the keys, for he had the primacy (here spoken of) before; and with respect to that, Christ directed these words to him rather than to any of the rest, because he was already the first *not in office*, but in *order*; and so the fittest person to be singled out, to represent what Christ intended. And to convince every one, that there is *no authoritative primacy* meant in these words of Austin, he adds, that "Judas sustained the person of Christ's enemies, as Peter did of the church." Will any one infer from hence, that Judas had a jurisdiction over all the wicked, and left it to his successors, one of whom now possesses the same? If any will be still so perverse as to dispute, because St. Austin does not mention Judas's primacy as he does Peter's; let them learn that Prosper one of Austin's scholars, upon the very same psalm, says expressly, that "Judas bore the primacy of Christ's enemies." Which if they will not expound to signify a supreme authority to govern Christ's enemies, let them no longer interpret Peter's primacy to signify such an authority over his friends. He had none here promised him, is as certain as any thing can be; but the keys to *commend unity* were promised, which were in truth given to *all* the rest. This is the ancient sense, which drew this plain observation from another candid writer in the Roman communion, "he said to Peter, I will give thee the keys, but he did not say, I will give them to thee alone;" Rigalt, in epist. Firmilian.

The other place alleged to prove Peter's supremacy, is St. John, 21. 15. where our Saviour bids Peter thrice, to "feed his sheep and lambs."—If this place be forced to bestow something on St. Peter, it will make him *not chief* but *sole pastor* of the whole church, and in this sense the popish council of Florence seems to have taken these words. If this be their sense then, I desire to know what is become of the charge to the apostles of "going to teach (which is the same with feeding) all

nations ;” and whether this commission about feeding the sheep, cancels that solemn and general one to all the apostles in the chapter preceding this, John 20. 21. &c. — But in this text it is evident that nothing more is enjoined than what was, and is the duty not only of apostles and bishops, but of presbyters. The latter are by St. Paul exhorted to “take heed to the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers,” Acts 20. 17, 18, and 1 Peter 5. 1, 2. If it be enquired, to what purpose was this three-fold question and charge to Peter? If we believe Munford the Jesuit, (Catholic scripturist,) it was that “he intended here to give him higher dignity in pastorship than the rest.” But, good reader, St. Cyril was a better scripturist and more catholic than this Jesuit, and he tells us, that this three-fold question about his love to Christ, was to put him on making satisfaction for his three-fold denial of Christ, and that the charge of feeding the sheep was a kind of renewal (*renewal*, *renewal* *the* lib. 12. in Joh. p. 1120.) of the apostleship formerly bestowed upon him; doing away the infamy of his fall, and blotting out the cowardice of human infirmity.” He does not say that our Lord *augmented* his dignity, (which is the new doctrine,) but that he *renewed* it, or *restored* him to it. Which dignity he had said, in the beginning of this discourse, Peter was advanced unto, when Christ named him, not *Præ alius*, but *Cum alius*, with other disciples to be an apostle; and therefore did not now give him more than the rest, but only declared he did not take the forfeiture he had made of that dignity, but reinstated him in it, together with the rest.*

Both parties of the Romanists, as well those that from this place make St. Peter prime bishop, as those that make him sole bishop of the catholic church, appeal to the fathers in defence of their several interpretations, and by the fathers we are very willing to be judged, concerning the true sense of these words. St. Cyprian, (de unit. eccl.) speaking of the apostles, says, “that every one of them were pastors, yet the flock but one, which

* Some Romanists pretend to discover wonderful mysteries in each of these words, “feed, my, and sheep.” For a full detection of their absurdities, see Pres. ag. popery, tit. 2. p. 17.

was to be fed by all the apostles, by their unanimous agreement." And in his epistle to Stephen bishop of Rome, (whom he calls his *brother*), "that though they were many pastors, (they two among the rest,) yet that the flock was but one, which they were to feed, and therefore that it was to be their care to secure and preserve all those sheep which Christ had bought with his blood."

In this epistle, we see the true state of the catholic church and of episcopal dignity at that time, how little they thought then that the bishop of Rome was either the prince of bishops, or the sole bishop in the church, when St. Cyprian tells Stephen, bishop of Rome, that "it was the province of every bishop to take care, lest any injury should happen to the flock of Christ by heretics, since they (the bishops) were in common entrusted (not he at Rome alone, or above the rest) with the government of the catholic church."—St. Ambrose, (*de dign. sacerdotum* tom. 1. 336.) speaking of our Saviour's bidding Peter to feed his sheep, says, "that Peter did not receive *alone* those sheep and that flock, but that he received them in common with the rest of the pastors of the church, and the pastors also with him," *sed et nobiscum eas suscepit, et cum illo eas nos suscepimus omnes*.—Austin baffles the opinions of both parties of the Romanists in very few, but very expressive words, "When it is said to Peter, it is said to all pastors, (*ad omnes dicitur*) lovest thou me? feed my sheep," (tom. 3. p. 550; 1528.) See Collins's *Ephata*, p. 43.

II. Some great privileges granted to St. Peter, which, as they suppose, imply his supremacy. They tell us that Peter's name is *always* placed first.—This is false; see Gal. 2. 9.—John 1. 44.—1 Cor. 3. 22.—1 Cor. 9. 5.—1 Cor. 1. 12.—And although we grant that Peter was first in *order*, yet it will not follow that he had a supremacy of *power*. This is plain from experience; for instance, the peers of England take place, according to their several degrees, and the seniority of their creation: yet none will imagine that the first peer has a supremacy of *jurisdiction* over all the rest.—It is alleged also, that St. Paul went to visit Peter, Gal. 1. 18. And what then? Does a visit from St. Paul suppose a man universal governor of the Church? If so, then St. James was universal governor of the church, for St. Paul went to see him, and moreover gave

him an account of his ministry, Acts 21. 18, 19.—They, say, that he spoke first in the council of Jerusalem. Now the scriptures say, “When there had been much disputing, Peter said to them.” And his speech and opinion did not end the dispute, for it is evident that James presided in, and put an end to the council, for James concludes the business, with “Wherefore my sentence is,” &c. Acts 15. 12. How would the Romanists have boasted, if Peter had closed the debate with these words.—They also allege that he walked on the sea, that his name was changed, that he preached to Cornelius, &c. And it is certainly an argument, says bishop Potter, that their cause is very defenceless, when they have recourse to such weak proofs for the support of an article, which in their scheme of religion is essential to the constitution of the christian church.

Upon so weak and unreal a foundation stands the claim of the bishops of Rome in its very first step. So little do even the texts which they themselves adduce, speak for them. But indeed if they had really contained any thing, which by fair influence might be construed to give a superiority to Peter, this is so guarded against by the whole tenour of scripture, that it could never with any show of reason, be ultimately maintained: For,

I. The APOSTLES NEVER BELIEVED that PETER was their CHIEF GOVERNOR, and CENTRE of COMMUNION to the whole church. For after Christ had made this pretended promise to Peter, we find that the mother of Zebedees children, desired that her sons might have the pre-eminence, Matt. 20. 21. and surely they would not have presumed to request it, if they had thought that our Lord had already bestowed it on Peter. Besides *all the ten* were equally moved with indignation at this request, thinking it an injury to them *all*.—If the apostles had known that our Saviour had appointed Peter his vicar upon earth, they would have acknowledged him their governor in all their spiritual proceedings: whereas it is very manifest that they never acknowledged any such thing. “The Roman high priest (says a Roman doctor* of the present day,) claims that primacy of *honor* and *jurisdiction* over the whole church that was given to Peter.” Now, a primacy of *order*, the divines of our church are very

* De la Hogue, Tract. de Ecclesia, 341.

willing to grant to Peter, but * “deny that Christ gave more power and authority to him, than he did to any other of his apostles;” and we require you, (says † Dr. Bramhall, bishop of Derry) to prove that St. Peter ever exercised a single act of jurisdiction over the rest of the apostles, more than they over him, besides and over and above his primacy of order.” We do not find any one instance of *appeal* to Peter, even in matters of the *greatest difficulty* and *importance*. When there was a vacancy in the college of apostles, Peter was not desired to fill it with some worthy person. It is true we have his speech, but there is not the least air of authority in it. We are told that “they (viz. Peter and all the rest, about one hundred and twenty,) appointed two.”—At the visitation of deacons, Act 6. 2. “the twelve called the multitude of disciples,” and directed them to elect the persons; and all without any particular direction, or special commission from Peter.—In that important transaction about the observance of Mosaical institutions, did they *appeal* to Peter, as the judge of controversies? No; but they sent to the apostles and presbyters at Jerusalem to enquire about the question; and accordingly they came together to consult about it. Peter then, did not *call* this assembly: nor did he *preside* in it. Nor did he send his legates to Antioch to signify what he and the council had done, but the apostles and the whole church chose and sent their messengers. Nor are the letters sent in Peter’s name, or any notice taken of any primacy, or prerogative of his above the other apostles. No, the inscription is, “the apostles, presbyters, and brethren send greeting.” Nor was this decree published to the church in Peter’s name, or made or confirmed by him, more than any other apostle.—When the apostles had heard, that Samaria had received the word of God,” Act 9. 14. Peter did not order some of the apostles to go, and instruct them, &c. but on the contrary, “the apostles sent to them Peter and John.”—When divisions were prevalent in the church of Corinth, 1 Cor. 1. 4, 2. one being for Paul, and another for Apollos, &c. Peter was not sent to for the decision of these controversies; nor did he ever take upon him to determine them, or to punish the schismatics, which doubtless he would have done, had it been

* Dr. Synge, archbishop of Tuam, 1st. answer to Nary, 109, 1729.

† Bramhall’s works, p. 299.

his province.—On the day of Pentecost, the converts are said to “have continued in the doctrine and fellowship, (not of Peter only,) but of all the apostles.”—They who sold their possessions for the use of the church, laid down the price at the feet of *all* the apostles, who distributed to every man, according as he had need. Thus we find that all things were carried on, by the joint authority of *all* the twelve.

II. ST. PETER NEVER BELIEVED that he was PRINCE of the APOSTLES. This may sufficiently appear from what has been already said. We never find him assuming any greater power, than what was common to all the apostles. His epistles are penned in the same strain with the other apostles, without any stamp of the vicar of Christ impressed upon them. How then, as bishop Morton* remarks, shall any imagine that you can truly object any one act of Peter, which might but probably prove his dominion and jurisdiction over the other apostles, as the pope challengeth over all other bishops, seeing that you are constrained to grant, that he made himself “equal” with them, so far as “that he might seem to have neglected his pastorate.”† Although, indeed, this Peter could not do, without exceeding injury to his place and government (if he had any such,) because it belongs to every one in his degree, to maintain and magnify the dignity of his ministry; as St. Paul teaches, saying, “I will magnify my office, inasmuch as I am apostle of the Gentiles.” Upon which text, Gregory bishop of Rome collects a general lesson, for the defence of his own jurisdiction: “The apostle, says he, teaches us so to carry humility in our heart, that we preserve the dignity of that order, whereunto we are called. (Greg. epist. 36. 1, 4.)

It has now been demonstrated, that there appears no evidence from scripture of any such *authority* conferred upon St. Peter, but many strong intimations to the contrary; and if God had designed the bishop of Rome to

* See the learned work of bishop Morton, called the Grand imposture of the (now) church of Rome manifested in this one article of the new Roman creed, viz. The Roman church, &c. without union to which, there is no salvation; proved to be new, false, schismatical, heretical, &c. Lond. 1628.

† Salmeron Jesuit, in Pet. 1. Disp. 1. tom. 16.

be the supreme governor of his church, and that the belief of this point is necessary to salvation, it may reasonably be supposed, that he would have expressly declared it; it being a point of the greatest importance of all that concern the administration of his church. St. Paul in several epistles, makes mention of Jesus Christ as head of the church, to whom all the members of it are to be united, Eph. 1. 20.—Rom. 12. 4.—Eph. 4. 16; and in another place speaking of the unity of the church, “ye are, says he, the body of Christ, and members in particular; and God hath set some in the church, *first, apostles*, secondly, prophets, &c. for the edifying of the body of Christ—till we all come in the unity of the faith,” Eph. 4. 13. Certainly, if the apostles were *all first*, to me it is very probable that none of them was before the rest. Now if this visible head of the church had been mentioned in other places ever so often, he ought not to have been omitted in these three places. And St. Paul says of himself in particular, “I am nothing inferior to the very chiefest apostles.”—But that St. Peter, and his successors were to be the centre of unity to the christian church, is nowhere said or intimated in the whole scripture; no, not even in the large epistle to the Romans themselves. St. Peter himself wrote two catholic epistles, and although he earnestly enjoins us “to obey the king as supreme,” yet there does not appear the least intimation of this pretence, of being the vicar of Christ and centre of unity. There are exhortations to honour the presbyters, and obey the governors of particular churches; but the honour and obedience due to these universal rulers are passed over in dead silence, as if no such thing had been thought of.*

* We may here take notice of a remarkable fallacy of Romish writers. From St. Paul's words to the Romans, “your faith is spoken of in all the world,” they infer that as the church of the city of Rome was then a pure and catholic church, so it has remained *the same* to this day; and also that it was the centre of communion to all churches.—But does not St. Paul suppose *that she may be broken off through unbelief* (chap. 11.) as well as any other church? And will not this inference apply equally to other apostolic churches? thus, St. Paul writes to the Thessalonians, “from you sounded out the word of the Lord, not only in Macedonia, and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God is spread abroad, 1 Thess. 1. 2, 8. May we not apply to *this church* the words of Dr. Hawarden, (True church, &c. p. 2.) that “the church in communion with the see of *Thessalonica*, was not only the true church in the apostles time, but also for some ages after

The apostles, says bishop Morton, in their epistles are urgent in inveighing against the heresies of Judaism, Gal. 1. 8.—Col. 2. Saducism, 1 Cor. 15. Worshipping angels, Col. 2. Against apostacy, 2 Thes. 2.—2 Tim. 4. 3. and Jude. Against divisions and schisms, 1 Cor. 11.—1 Cor. 10. 12. and abuse of ecclesiastical orders, &c. Rom. 12.—Eph. 4. 11.—1 Cor. 12. &c. And yet in all these, there appeareth not one syllable or iota to prove your article of the catholic Roman church, “without union and subjection to *which*, and to its *head* there is no salvation.” No, nor yet so much as to intimate any one of the parts of this article : as first, not to signify that the church of Rome was a catholic, much less the catholic church, as being in right, which you hold, “the mother and mistress of all churches.” Nor do they note, that in the convincing of heretics, christians ought to look to the faith of the Roman church : nor that for the preventing schisms, christians ought to be united to the bishop of Rome. All which those holy apostles, without all doubt, ought and would have done, (if according to the new Roman faith) either the name catholic had then been appropriated to Rome ; or that the necessity of union and subjection to the authority of the same head, had been so necessary, as that “without which no christian could be saved.”

* I have thus examined all the places that are alleged to prove the pope’s supremacy ; and I think I have abundantly shown, that none of these places does in the least favour such pretences, since not only the comparing these with other places of scripture, but the almost unanimous consent of the fathers proves to the perfect silencing of these pretensions, that such a supremacy has no foundation in scriptures ; and if it has none there, it is in a sad condition indeed, since if Christ himself did not make the bishop of Rome his vicar, all the general councils in the

it.”—In reading Romish authors, we ought to keep in mind this great truth, viz. that other christians and churches were no more in communion with the church of Rome, than she was with other churches, and all of them with one another, and so those who separated from this body, or from any member of it, as well as from the church of Rome, were in those happy ages accounted schismatics, whether separatists from the Greek, Latin, or any Oriental church.

... * Dr. Gee, vind. ans. to Nubes Test. 1689.

world together, cannot make him such : I am sure St. Luke, who tells Theophilus, that he drew up his former treatise, about all that our Saviour did till his ascension, does no where tell us that he did this, but does in the next verse tell us in effect the direct contrary ; while he speaks of his charges to the apostles whom he had chosen, (Acts 1. 1.) I cannot omit observing here, that as none of those places of scripture prove any supremacy for St. Peter, so neither do they prove any *prerogative* for him : as they equally concerned all the apostles, so they equally distribute any honour among them, without preferring one above another. This observation I make for the sake of those * gentlemen in France especially ; who though they have with unanswerable arguments baffled the extravagant pretensions of the Romish courtiers, yet allow the bishop of Rome to be Christ's vicar instated by him in the primacy over the whole church. I would only recommend to such, the consideration of the Father's interpretations of the places of scripture cited above, and these three short passages in antiquity ; the first from St. Cyprian, (De unit. Eccl.) who speaking of the nature and government of the catholic church, says, " that there is but one episcopacy, whereof every particular bishop of the catholic church, had an equal share, and the full power of that function." The second is St. Chrysostom's, (Tom. 8. 115) who speaking of the apostles, tells us, that " they were all ordained governors by our Saviour ; not (temporal) governors, to receive each his nation and city, but (spiritual) entrusted in common all together (*αὐτοῖς κοινῶς*) with the government of the catholic church throughout the world." The last shall be that of a pope himself, who in an epistle to a bishop of Arles, (Symach. Ep. 1. ad œn.) compares episcopacy to the Trinity, and says that " as in the Trinity there is but one inseparable power, so episcopacy is but *one* (though) in the hands of particular bishops." I hope those that own the Athanasian creed, where we are taught that in the Trinity, no person is greater or less than another, but that the three persons are co-equal, will for the future believe with pope Symachus ; that in the episcopal office no bishop is greater or less than another, but that all the bishops in the world are co-equal, and

* He means Richer, Launsi, Vigor, Rigaltius, Dupin, &c. Drs. of the Sorbonne.

then I am sure all christians will believe with us, that there was no superiority, nor supremacy; nor prerogative communicated by our Saviour unto any one of his twelve apostles.

It is very absurd to allege the titles given by the fathers, (particularly *St. Jerom*,) to St. Peter, as a proof of authority, since not only similar titles are bestowed by them on other apostles, but they also expressly affirm that the rest were equal to Peter both in power and dignity. "But thou sayest, says *Jerom*, (in *Jovin. l. 14.*) that the church was founded on Peter; though the very same in another place is done upon *all* the apostles, and *they* received the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and the firmness of the church is solidly established on them *equally*;" and therefore when *Jerom* says "that one was appointed to prevent schism," he cannot possibly mean any other *primacy*, but such as is among *equals*, and not any supremacy of *power* over them. See bishop *Bramhall's* works, p. 202. 257. Here bishop *Stillingfleet* remarks, (*Answer to Laud's Labyrinth*, p. 432.) that "we are so far from seeing such a supremacy of power, as you challenge to the pope, to be necessary for preventing *schisms*, that we are sufficiently convinced that the usurping of it, has caused one of the *greatest* ever was in the christian world." If then, *Jerom* affirms that "the strength of the church is established upon them *equally*," then not more eminently upon Peter, than the rest. And though *Jerom* gives the first place to Peter, by "reason of his age:" yet he tells us he was only an apostle, and that St. John, was upon several accounts to be preferred before him: "Peter, says he, was an apostle, and John was an apostle; but Peter was an apostle only, John was an apostle, and an evangelist, and a prophet," (*Adv. Jovin. lib. 1. c. 27.*) And when he calls Peter, *Princeps apostolorum*, he explains it so, as to exclude all pretence to authority over them. "For, as *Plato*, says he, was the *Princeps* of the philosophers, so Peter was of the apostles," (*Adv. Jovin. lib. 1. c. 2.*) Now I appeal to any one, whether *Plato* had dominion over the rest of the philosophers. The most then that *Jerom* could mean, was no more than this, that Peter was the first of the apostles, *Princeps* and *Primus* in ancient authors, being words of the same signification. And this primacy of order we never denied to Peter.

I shall conclude this chapter, with the candid confession of cardinal Cusanus, (Conc. Cath. 2. 13.) "*Sed acimus quod Petrus nihil plus potestatis a Christ recepit aliis apostolis—nihil enim dictum est ad Petrum, quod aliis non dictum sit.—Ideo recte dicimus, omnes apostolos in potestatem cum Petro æquales.*"

CHAP. X.

The supremacy of the bishop of Rome, confuted from the writings of the fathers of the first three centuries after Christ.

I proceed now to the testimonies of the fathers, concerning the supremacy of the bishop of Rome. But it must be recollected, that there is not the least intimation of such a supremacy in the scriptures; and that although the writers of the primitive ages, were men of piety and learning, and have taught and maintained several opinions—some of which are manifestly false, and though some of them may appear to be probable or it may be true; yet no such opinion is to be received as an *article of the catholic faith*, or the belief of it to be owned as *necessary to salvation*; except it appear to have been so taught by the apostles, and first preachers of the gospel.

To begin them at **THE FIRST AGE**. St. IGNATIUS, bishop of Antioch, in many epistles extols the dignity of bishops to the highest pitch, but never once mentions this head of the catholic church. In his very epistle to the Romans, so far from yielding any deference to their bishop, he does not even take notice of him. This epistle he inscribes "*to the church, which presides in the country of the Romans;*" from whence this extraordinary conclusion has been drawn, "*that therefore she is the head of all other churches.*"* Now surely every particular episcopal see presides in her own diocese, and therefore Ignatius does not say, which presides in the

* Dela Hogue, tract de Ecclesia. p. 342.

world, but merely in the province of Rome, (in regione Romanorum.)

CLEMENS, bishop of Rome, wrote an epistle * to the church of Corinth, then engaged in factions, in which the clergy were much affronted, wherein like a good bishop, and christian brother, he earnestly persuades them, by many inducements, to peace, but no where speaks imperiously as their prince. What a thundering bull, says Dr. Barrow, would a modern pope have dispatched against such outrageous contemners of the clergy ? how often would he have spoken of the apostolic see and its authority ? we should infallibly have heard him swagger in his usual style, " whoever shall presume to oppose our will, let him know that he shall incur the indignation of almighty God, and his apostles Peter and Paul ?†

The APOSTOLIC CONSTITUTIONS and the CONSTITUTIONS of CLEMENT describe the state of the church in very ancient times, though they were not compiled in the times of the apostles. In these, the ranks, duties, and privileges of all ecclesiastical persons are declared, yet they never give the least intimation of this " superintendent of the whole church," or his prerogatives, or the respect due to him ; which is no less strange than that there should be a body of laws, or description of the state of any kingdom, wherein nothing should be mentioned concerning the king or royal authority.—They particularly prescribe " that the bishops of each nation, should own him that is first among them, (i. e. their archbishop,) and esteem him as their head, and do nothing extraordinary without his consent ; and that each of these (archbishops) should meddle only with those affairs that concerned his own district ; also that he should not do any thing without the consent of all ; that so there may be concord." Now what place could be more opportune to mention the pope's jurisdiction over the whole church ? but does not the canonist exclude it, assigning the supreme disposal (without further resort) of all things to the arbitration of the body of bishops, and

* In this manner, " by the concord of bishops," was the unity of the church anciently preserved ; thus St. Ignatius's epistles to several churches ; and Dionysius bishop of Corinth, (says Eusebius, IV. 23.) wrote general epistles to divers churches, &c.

† Such is the conclusion of papal bulls.

placing the maintenance of unity in that course?—In all this age, no trace is to be seen of the power of the bishop of Rome without the limits of his particular church. No law given to the universal church. No appeal from any church. All the churches founded immediately by the apostles, as that of Jerusalem, Rome, Thessalonica, Antioch, were honoured above all others, and were called the first and apostolic. And the churches that were planted by those, first took the same title, and were much honoured. Of them Tertullian (*Præscr. lib. 2.*) speaks thus: “they are *all first and apostolic*, while the communion of peace and the name of brethren, and the common earnestness of hospitality, show the union that is among them all.” This age brought forth many heresies, the Simonians, Cerinthians, Ebionites, Nicolaitans, &c. If the bishop of Rome had been Head of the church, it was his duty to summon these heretics, and condemn their errors. But of that not the least trace is found. Neither do we see in Irenæus, Epiphanius, &c. who have by express treatises described the ancient heresies, that any of those heretics were condemned for disobeying the pope, and not yielding to his judgment.

IN THE SECOND AGE, there are some remarkable instances, that the communion of the catholic church was not to be taken from conjunction with the bishop of Rome, as head of it. The first is the case of VICTOR bishop of Rome, and the ASIAN CHURCHES. This is so far from being *for*, (as some pretend) that it is one of the clearest instances in antiquity against the bishop of Rome’s supremacy: when the controversy about the celebration of Easter began to grow warm, there were several synods assembled about it, which are mentioned in *this order*, by Eusebius: “there is extant the epistle of the synod in Palestine over which Theophilus bishop of Cæsarea, and Narcissus bishop of Jerusalem presided; another epistle of the synod at Rome, having Victor the bishop’s name prefixed to it; another in Pontus over which Palmas presided; and an epistle of the churches in France, over which Irenæus was bishop,” &c. And from them all together, not from the bishop of Rome, or his synod, proceeded the rule of celebrating Easter *only* on the Lord’s day. This rule, it is probable Victor was desired to transmit to the Asiatics, thereby to bring them to an agreement in this thing. The Asian bishops refus-

ed, and stated their reasons, in an epistle, written and sent by Polycrates bishop of Ephesus, to the bishop and church of Rome; which was so highly resented by Victor, that he immediately does that which he seems to have threatened them with in his former letter to them, and excommunicates * the Asian churches. But this act of Victor's did not put the Asian bishops out of a state of salvation, for it was so far from being approved of by those bishops who agreed with him in the time of Easter, that they all fell upon him for this irregular extravagant action, and "command him (*ἄντιπαράκλημοντα*) to mind those things that tend to promote peace and unity among neighbours." Moreover, says Eusebius, their epistles are extant, wherein they have *severely reprov'd* Victor. I think this behaviour does not clearly prove the supremacy of the bishop of Rome, and this would certainly have been very unaccountable behaviour to Christ's *true* vicar, who had full power of governing the whole church, and who alone was able to judge what was fit to be done in such cases.

But says Natalis Alexander, Irenæus does not deny Victor's *power* of excommunicating the Asian bishops.—It is true, he does not, and what is more, he could not, since every bishop in the catholic church, and therefore the Roman bishop among the rest, might refuse to communicate with any other bishop or church, against whom they thought they had sufficient reason for such a suspension of communion. So John of Antioch in the Ephesian synod excommunicated Cyril, patriarch of Alexandria, and the African bishops excommunicated Vigilius, bishop of Rome, (*a catholicâ communione recludunt.*†) The name of Felix bishop of Rome was expunged from the diptychs of the church by Acacius, patriarch of Constantinople, and Hilary anathematized Liberius, an Arian bishop of Rome. And if these excommunications did not argue just authority over the persons excommunicated, neither could Victor's do it; and it is plain that all the force of excommunication lay in the sense of the church; for by whomsoever the sentence was pronounced, if all other

* Eusebius expressly tells us, that "he did by letters pronounce them excommunicated;" and this is the opinion of Socrates, Dr. Cave, Halloix, Bellarmine, Tillemont:

† Victor Tunens Chron. p. 10.

churches observed it, (as most commonly they did, while the unity of the church remained,) then they were out of the communion of the catholic church; if not, then it was only the particular declaration of those persons or churches who did it. And in this case, the validity of Victor's excommunication of the Asian bishops depended upon the acceptance of it by other churches, which not consenting to it, he could not throw them out of the communion of the whole church, but only declare that if they came to Rome, he would not admit them to communion with him.

This action of Victor's was so little regarded in the catholic church, that it does not appear that any christians refused communion with the Asians. Whence, says bishop Morton, it is manifest that a christian may have communion with the catholic church elsewhere throughout the world, notwithstanding the excommunication of the bishop of Rome: and therefore the Roman church cannot be called the catholic church, as the head, whereunto all others ought to profess *union* and yield *subjection*. And it is to be observed, that in defiance of this decree of Victor's, the Asian bishops retained their own customs, until the fourth century, when the council of Nice rendered the time of celebrating Easter the same in all churches; and this too, without any mention of Victor, and without any regard to his authority. So much for the first instance produced to prove the constant exercise of the pope's universal jurisdiction.

But the main support of the popish system is a passage in the works of IRENÆUS, bishop of Lyons, who consented with the Asian bishops, that were excommunicated by Victor. "To this church, (i. e. the church of the city of Rome) it is necessary that every church, this is, the faithful who are round about, (*eos qui sunt undique fideles*,) should resort*, on account of a more powerful principality." Now this *potentior principalitas* is not that of the church, but of the city, "because (says Richerius on this passage, Hist. conc. gen. l. p. 5, 1683.) Rome was the imperial city of the world, and the seat of the Roman empire," and also being the seat of the senate and chief judicatures, it must have brought all sorts of people thither, from all parts of the world, and therefore

* Thus *convenire* is truly translated by bp. Challenor. Grounds of old religion, 72.

made this church a *most visible* and *eminent* church, and on this account the most proper for Irenæus's design against the heretics, when he had obliged himself to reckon up *one* among the several apostolic churches in the world; and it was for this reason, he instanced only in Rome, for he shows that he might have proved his tradition from *other churches*, (*longum esset enumerare ecclesi-
as.*)—Gregory Nazianzen says almost literally the same thing of *Constantinople* two centuries after: *Εἰς ἣν πανταχόθεν ἀνέεισεν οὐκ ὀλίγη, καὶ οὐκ ἀρχαία, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἰσχυρὴ καὶ ἐκτετατὴ πύλη, vol. I. 317, i. e.* “to which the people from the farthest parts of the world run together, and from whence as from a common emporium of the faith, they take their rise, or direction.”—Now if it was not for the sake of business, that people resorted to Rome, I ask what they went thither for? Was it for the catholic faith? that Irenæus assures us every one had at home, “the apostles after their churches were planted, delivering to them the true faith, which was then kept, as he assures us, inviolably by them,” and therefore no necessity to go to Rome for it, *cont. hæ. l. 3. c. 3.* Was it for discipline? no, for in the several churches which they planted, the apostles ordained bishops, delivering to them (*suum ipsorum locum magisterii*) “their own place and power of jurisdiction,” which certainly was for discipline.*

In the beginning of *THE THIRD AGE* lived *TER-
TULLIAN*, who in his *Apology*, p. 39. thus describes the unity of the church in his time, “We are one body, by agreement in religion, our unity of discipline and our being in the same covenant of hope;” and in his *Prescriptions* against heretics, “that it consisted in adhering to that doctrine, which was first preached by the apostles, who having first delivered it in Judæa, and planted churches there, went and declared the same to other nations; and settled churches in cities, from whence other churches have the same doctrine propagated to them, which are therefore called apostolic churches, as the offspring of those that were founded by them. Therefore so many and so great churches are all that *one* first apostolic church, from which all are derived: thus they are all first and apostolic whilst they maintain the same

* Tenison's answer to Ward's *Speculum*, 1688.

unity; whilst there is that communion of peace, title of brotherhood, and common mark of hospitality." Wherein we see that which made churches in Tertullian's sense apostolic, was the embracing and continuing in that doctrine which was first delivered by the apostles; and thus, churches though remote from the apostles times may have the denomination of apostolic, from their agreement in doctrine with those which were founded by them. But here is not the least intimation of any centre of ecclesiastical communion to the catholic church.

It is objected that "Tertullian confutes all the prevailing heresies of those days, by the doctrine of the church of Rome." * Now the plain truth is this: Tertullian to secure the christians of his time, in the doctrine of the apostles, prescribes to them to consult with mother churches founded immediately by the apostles, and sends those who lived near Italy, to Rome; those near Achaia, to Corinth; those of Asia, to Ephesus, &c.; but these latter churches are carefully concealed by Roman writers. Tertullian's words are, "† Go now, thou that wilt better employ thy curiosity in the business of thy salvation; run over the apostolic churches, in which to this day the chairs of the apostles are presided on, in their places, in which their authentic epistles are recited. Is Achaia near thee? there thou hast Corinth. If thou art not far from Macedonia, there thou hast Philippi; if thou canst go into Asia, thou hast Ephesus; but if thou be adjacent to Italy, thou hast Rome, whose authority is near at hand to us (in Africa, for Tertullian was an African,) a happy church, to which the apostles poured forth all their doctrine, with their blood." Might not this place have been urged by a Corinthian, or Philippian, &c. to show that in Tertullian's judgment, separation from any of their churches was a certain mark of heresy, as justly as this is alleged to vindicate this privilege to the Roman church only. For though he gives an honourable testimony to the church of Rome, yet in point of direction he makes them all equal, and as B. Rhenanus, a learned Romanist acknowledges, (Arg. in Tertul. de Prescr. 1524), "he did not esteem

* Chalenor's Grounds, p. 73, 1746.

† Prescr. c. 36. Compare Tertul. adv. Marc. 4, 5, and Prescr. 21.

set so highly, as we see her accounted at this day. He reckons her with other churches, but does not make her the only church, but admonishes his readers to enquire what doctrine the church of Corinth professed, as well as Rome. If he were now alive, and should say so much, he could not escape without punishment.* So far Rhenanus, and it is to be remarked, that this passage has been expunged by the Index Expurgatorius, Belg. p. 78.*

I proceed now, to the testimony of the illustrious martyr St. CYPRIAN, who, (says Dr. Field) of all others, most clearly overthrows the error of the Romanists touching the papacy. In his book of the Unity of the church, he teaches us that there is but "one episcopacy, part of which every bishop holds with full authority and power," (*episcopatus unus est, cujus a singulis in solidum pars tenetur;*) where, by one episcopacy, he understands one bishoprick, that is the universal church, which, as it is but one church; is but one bishoprick also, it being all under the government of the episcopal power. But then this bishoprick is divided into parts, into particular dioceses, and every bishop has a part of this universal bishoprick, which he has *in solidum*: i. e. he has his part to govern with the fulness and plenitude of episcopal power, without any superior authority or jurisdiction over him.—Another principle of St. Cyprian is, that this one episcopacy is preserved *unz*, by the concord and agreement of bishops; for if the bishops who have the supreme government of their own churches, disagree, this must of necessity divide the episcopacy and the church; but this one bishoprick is spread over the world by the consenting multitude of many bishops" (Ep. 52.) and therefore he calls it "the unity and peace of the episcopacy;" and for the same reason Optatus, (lib. 1.) calls it "the episcopal college;" and bishops are called "colleagues." St. Cyprian says also, "the catholic church is not divided, but united by the cement of bishops, who adhere closely together," (Ep. 69.)

Another principle is, that no bishop or college of bishops have a direct authority or jurisdiction over their

* Morton's grand impost. 91. Chillingworth, ch. 6. sect. 4. Barrow's works, 1. 626.

colleagues, to compel them to submit to their decrees against their own judgment and conscience.* "that none of them pretended to be bishop of bishops," (pref. to Co. Carthag.) which he abhors as a tyrannical usurpation.—Another is, that since there is but one episcopacy, every bishop, besides the supreme government of his own diocese, has such a relation to the whole church, that he is to take care, (as much as in him lies,) that no part of the church suffer by the heresies or schisms of their bishops; which is the reason he gives, why there are so many bishops in the christian church, (Ep. 67:) "that if any of our college (i. e. any bishop) should endeavour to broach any new heresy, or to tear and spoil the flock of Christ, the rest may come to their help, and like good and faithful pastors, collect again the sheep of Christ into their fold."

The first argument St. Cyprian uses, to prove the Unity of the church, is the unity of the apostolic office, and assigns this as the reason, why our Saviour in a particular manner committed the keys to Peter, when he gave the same power, (*parem potestatem*) to all the rest of the apostles, which he did to Peter, viz. "to manifest the unity, (*ut unitatem manifestaret, &c.*) of the apostolic office and power, that there is but one chair, and one original of unity, which begins in one; for the rest of the apostles, were the same that Peter was, endowed with an equal fellowship, both of honour and power, (*hoc utique erant et cæteri apostoli, quod fuit Petrus, pari consortio præditi honoris et potestatis,†*) but the beginning is from unity, and the primacy is given to Peter; to show that the church of Christ is one, and the chair one, (i. e. the apostolic office and power). They are all pastors, but there is but one flock, which is fed by all the apostles with a joint consent, (*unanimi consensione.*)" The apostles then, were equal to Peter in honour and power; and this dignity, he says, ought to

* How far this extends, see Sherlock Def. of Stillingfleet, p. 189.

† This passage is so clear, that the Romanists have used every art to evade it. *Nullum enim artificium est non abhinitum, si non elevando, certe obsecrando*, says Chamier, who has with great patience, shown the weakness of their arguments, see Panstratia, vol. 2, 471.

be kept in particular, "by us bishops who preside in the church," all equally we see. This is the plain design of this passage, (says Dr. Sherlock) which has been so much abused by the Romanists, viz. that Christ in naming Peter only, in giving the apostolic power, signified, that the apostolic office, though exercised by several persons, is but one office and power, which is not so properly divided among the apostles, as administered by a joint consent, and therefore giving this power to one apostle, included the bestowing it on the whole apostolic college.

And therefore when Cyprian says, that Christ built his church upon Peter alone, he does not and cannot mean the person of Peter, but that *apostolic office and power*, which was given to the college of the apostles in the name of Peter, as the church is said to be "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets;" and as he says himself in another place, that "the church is built upon bishops."—And when he says that Christ gave the primacy to Peter, and yet at the same time affirms that the other apostles were equal to him in honour and power, it can signify only, that Christ named Peter first, or rather instead of all the apostles, to recommend that unity he designed to have in his church, and to instruct them (*ut manifestaret*) that though they were many, yet their office and power was but one, which they were to exercise as one man, with one consent. And this is evident from a parallel passage of Isidore, Ep. 10. "Nothing is so pleasing to God as love; our Saviour *making this manifest*, or showing immediately from the beginning, that he wished all his disciples should be united as brethren." Where we see that *arguimus*, and *revidemus*, are used in the same sense, as *exordium* and *manifestare* in Cyprian. But Cyprian was so far from thinking that any power over the rest was here promised to Peter, that he never so much as intimates it.

There are some remarkable cases occurring in St. Cyprian's time, which clearly prove in what the unity of the church then consisted.—Felicissimus and some other presbyters being excommunicated by St. Cyprian, fled to Rome, hoping to find a support in Cornelius the bishop there. Cornelius, although at first unwilling, yet finally was compelled by their menaces to

receive their letters. Upon which Cyprian writes to Cornelius, and exhorts him "not to be moved by their threats," and that it is inconsistent with the power of any christian bishop to fear the insidious dealings of impious men; at the same time putting him in mind of the commendations given by St. Paul of the Romans, and that such traitors and perfidious men could get no support from them, (*ad quos perfidia non potest habere accessum*). He then tells him, "that if the threats of such profligate persons should relax the church's discipline, all the power of it would soon be taken away, and that the ground of all schism, arises from disobedience to the bishop." He does not mean the bishop of Rome as Bellarmine^a supposes, but every bishop; for it was not Cornelius, but Cyprian that was disobeyed. He then acquaints Cornelius, that the cause had been already judged in Africa, and intimates to him, that he had no right to meddle with it. For, says he, "since it is decreed by us all, and it is both reasonable and just, that every one's cause should be heard where the crime was committed, and every pastor has a part of the flock committed to him, which he is to govern, and to give an account thereof (not to Rome, but) to the Lord. Our subjects ought not to run about, (i. e. apply to any foreign jurisdiction) nor break the concord of bishops by their rash and fallacious attempts, but to plead their cause there, where they may have accusers and witnesses of their crimes;" i. e. that it belongs not to Cornelius, nor to the Roman church, to take cognizance of a cause already judged in Africa, and that the authority of the African church is not (*minor*) less than that of the Roman. How far then were Cyprian and the African bishops from making Rome the centre of communion, when they looked on appeals thither, as very unjust and unreasonable? what acknowledgement and dependence was there on the church of Rome in those, who looked on themselves as having a portion of Christ's flock, committed to them, of which they were to give an account to God alone?

^a "Simply to relate the words of this author, says a Dr. of Sorbonne, is simply to confute them, they are so very contrary to truth and equity." Launoy epist. p. 77.

In this epistle to Cornelius, Cyprian charges his schismatical presbyters, that having set up a bishop against himself at Carthage, "they dared to sail to the chair of Peter, and the principal church, from whence priestly unity sprung;" from hence our adversaries infer that the see of Rome was the centre of unity.—To this I answer, that it was called the principal church, "because it was constituted in the principal city," as Rigaltius notes upon the words, and quotes the 28th canon of the co. of Chalcedon to confirm it. As for "priestly unity," we must observe that at this time there was a schism at Rome between Cornelius and Novatian, both of whom laid claim to the bishoprick. Now the African schismatics on their arrival at Rome, address themselves to Cornelius, who was the true bishop, and lawful successor of St. Peter in opposition to Novatian. Therefore St. Cyprian calls his see "the chair of St. Peter; from whence sprung unity," because the contrary party of Novatian had been the cause of the schism, and therefore the true root of unity was with Cornelius, and not with the schismatical Novatian.—And this will serve as an answer to the passage in Ep. 55; where Cyprian orders those who sail to Rome to "hold to the root and matrix of the catholic church." But you are so very unreasonable, says the learned Stillingfleet,* that though no more be said of Rome, than might be said of any other apostolic church, yet because it is said of the church of Rome, it must import some vast authority, which if it had been said of any other, would have been interpreted by yourselves into nothing: for, because it is said that they who joined with Cornelius, did preserve the unity of the catholic church, therefore it must needs be understood, that the Roman church is the root of the catholic. But he must have a very mean understanding, that can be swayed by such trifles as these are. For was there not a catholic and schismatic party then at Rome? and if they who joined with Novatian, separated from the catholic church, then they who were in communion with Cornelius, must preserve the unity of it. And would not this argument as well prove the catholic party at Carthage to

* Stillingfleet's works, vol. 4, 291, 305, 307, 605. Field on the church, 162.

be the *root and matrix* of the catholic church, as at Rome?

Besides Cyprian in Ep. 78 speaks in his own person with other catholic bishops, (*nos qui ecclesie istius caput et radicem tenemus*), "*we who hold the head and root of one church*," by which it appears that he could not make the church of Rome, the root and matrix of the catholic church; this being understood of the *unity and society of the catholic church*, without relation to the church of Rome: and because no particular church can be the root of the catholic, and if any, Jerusalem had better pretensions to it than Rome, and because Cyprian and his brethren durst not have *suspended* their communion at all, if they had esteemed the church of Rome, the root and matrix of the catholic church, (as Baronius confesses they did); all which things serve to confirm, that by this expression was not meant any authority or privilege of the church of Rome above other *apostolic churches*, which in respect of the *lesser churches* which came from them, are called *matrices ecclesie*; by Tertullian and others.

I come now to the 2nd. instance alleged to prove the constant exercise of the bishop of Rome's universal authority. But St. Cyprian was so far from acknowledging any such authority, that he resolutely opposed him and all that adhered to him, in the point of re-baptization which the church of Rome decreed and delivered as a necessary tradition. So necessary, that by the bishop of Rome, Firmilian and other bishops of Cappadocia, Cilicia, and Galatia, and generally all who persisted in the contrary opinion, were excommunicated, and Cyprian in particular, pronounced "a false Christ." Again, so necessary, that the bishops which were sent by Cyprian to Rome, were not admitted to the communion of ordinary conference. But all men subject to the bishop of Rome's authority were commanded by him, to

* St. Cyprian in his letter to Pompeius, speaks thus of Stephen, "I have sent thee a copy of Stephen's writing, which, when thou hast read, thou wilt more and more mark that man's error, who endeavours to defend the cause of heretics against christians and the church of God." Ep. 74, 75. The 75th epistle was left out of the Roman edition of Cyprian, and Pamelius honestly declares he would have stifled it, if others had not published it before him.

deny them even lodging and entertainment. Notwithstanding all these terrors, Cyprian holds his former opinion; and the bishops who agree with him, pronounce Stephen cut off from the unity of the church. The words of Firmilian, bishop of Cesarea, are, "excidisti enim teipsum. Nolite fallere. Siquidem ille est verè schismaticus, qui se a communione ecclesiasticæ unitatis apostatam fecit. Dam enim putas omnes a te abstinere posse, eolum te ab omibus abstinuisti.*"

Now I desire to know, whether these bishops believed the Roman bishop to be the centre of communion in the catholic church: it is plain they made him the cause of schism, and never thought themselves excluded from the catholic church, for being out of the Roman communion. This was that St. Cyprian, says bishop Morton, who uttered that excellent saying, "no man hath God for his father, who hath not the church for his mother," little doubting but a man might have the church for his mother, who stood in opposition to the church of Rome, and far from thinking that separation from the church of Rome, was a certain mark either of schism or heresy. Moreover Cyprian to his last day, held his former opinion, and St. Austin (though, disputing with the Donatists, he uses a kind of laudable tergiversation in this point, says Baronius) confesses elsewhere, that "it is not found that Cyprian ever changed his opinion." If then, says bishop Morton, St. Cyprian being excommunicated by the pope, was notwithstanding still esteemed a catholic, and has ever since, been registered for a saint: then doubtless protestants stand much more secure, who are excommunicated for opposing not only the gross idolatry, but also as many heresies of the church of Rome, as she hath new articles of faith, among which this, viz. "the catholic Roman church, without union to which there is no salvation," must not be held the least.

* The popish editors are all somewhat troubled at these strong expressions of Firmilian, and the last (the Benedictine) saves the credit of his cause, by saying, that the father "was perhaps hurried by the messenger, whom St. Cyprian sent to him, so that he could not read his letter over again." Vit. Cyp. p. 117. A most notable conjecture indeed! and that will do equally well for all epistles as well as this! Le Meurrier's Bampton lectures, 171.

We have been informed by St. Cyprian, "that there is one episcopacy, part of which every bishop holds with full authority and power." But to this it is objected, that each bishop has not an equal part in the episcopal office, that Peter and his successors are as the root, and head, and that "to preserve the unity of it, some eminent authority is necessary in one, over all other bishops." But this is refuted by St. Cyprian himself and the whole council of Carthage, who say, "none of us makes himself a bishop of bishops, or tyrannically forces his colleagues to a necessity of obeying, since every bishop has full power to determine for himself, and can no more be judged by others, than he can judge them. But let us all wait for the judgment of Christ, *who alone* has power to make us governors of his church, and to call us to account for our administration;" (Pref. co. Carth.) And that this includes all bishops, is evident from Cyprian's epistle to Stephen bishop of Rome, in which having shown his reasons for dissenting from him "for the fellowship they have in the same honourable calling, and the simplicity of his love," he hopes Stephen will approve that which is right, though "we (says he) know that some will not easily alter their minds, but the bond of peace and concord, with their colleagues being preserved, will stiffly maintain what they have once conceived; wherein we do not force or give law to any; for every prelate hath, in the administration of his church, *the full power* of his will, being to render *the Lord* an account of his actions." And what words could be more express, in assertion of the episcopal rights, against almost every branch of Romish pretences? Besides St. Cyprian expressly asserts, that the rest of the apostles were the same as Peter, vested with an equal fellowship both of *honor* and *power*. And therefore whatever primacy (or rather precedence) he ascribes to Peter, can only be in respect of *order*; a priority in rank before them. And, says archbishop Bramhall, if this would serve the See of Rome, this controversy were at an end for our parts. But this primacy is *too lean*, the court of Rome has no gusto to it; they thirst after a visible monarchy upon earth, an absolute ecclesiastical sovereignty, a power to make canons, to abolish canons, to dispense with canons, to dispense dignities, to decide controversies by a

single authority &c.; this was what made the breach, not the innocent primacy of St. Peter.

Thus far we see St. Cyprian was from this modern notion of the catholic church, that he looks on the unity of it, as depending on the consent of the catholic bishops and churches under their *full power*, and not deriving that unity from any particular church, as the head and fountain of it. And therefore in the former schism at Rome about Cornelius and Novatian; St. Cyprian sent two of his colleagues thither; that not only by the letters they carried, but by their presence and council, "they should endeavour to bring the members of that divided body, to the unity of the catholic church" (see ad catholicos ecclesiarum unitatem, scissi corporis membra componerent, ep. 49.) Which is certainly a very different thing from the catholic church, deriving its unity from the particular church of Rome.

We may observe here, that the name *papa* or *pope*, (which, says bishop Barlow, is now appropriated to the bishop of Rome, and impertinently used to insinuate the papal supremacy,) was anciently applied to all bishops. For instance, "St. Cyprian being asked by the persecutor who had orders to put him to death, art thou he, whom the christians call their pope? he answered I am." Pont. de vita Cypri. Borssii opera l. 461. where the ancient titles of bishops are collected. The name *papa* continued common to all bishops, for 850 years, till Gregory VII. in 1073 decreed, that there should be but one pope in the world; says Baronius, Martyrol. p. 35.

EUSEBIUS, surnamed of CÆSAREA, has written a History of the church, from the birth of Christ to the year 325. Yet this industrious compiler* of all passages relating to the original constitution of the church, and all ecclesiastical transactions, never once mentions the

* Eusebius's History abounds in quotations from more than 28 writers of the three first centuries, yet there is no mention in any one of them, of any superior authority belonging to the bishop of Rome. Nor is there the least intimation of it in the following writers who lived within the same time, whose works remain to this day: Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Tatian, Theophilus, Clemens Alex. Tertullian's Apol., &c. Minutius Felix, Origen, Arnobius, Lactantius, &c. &c. Indeed these are always passed over in silence by Roman writers.

bishops of Rome as possessing any authority over the catholic church, or as being its centre of unity. This principle we never find urged against the schisms and heresies which broke out in the very city of Rome; particularly the Novatian schism which began in Rome itself, and lasted 200 years. Blastus and Florinus raised a great schism in Rome, who (says Eusebius) drew away many from that church, and enticed them to embrace their opinions; these heresies were quelled, not by the pope's authority, but by the arguments of Irenæus bishop of Lyons. And in the same age, while Victor was bishop of Rome, a pestilent heresy was raised in that city by a tanner and a banker, who set up a bishop, and settled a maintenance on him. Surely the modern Romanists ought no longer to upbraid *our church*, with the preaching of mechanics and tradesmen.*

There is a remarkable instance in Eusebius (lib. 7: 27. anno. 265.) which clearly proves in what manner the unity of the church was preserved. It is concerning the deposition of Paulus Samosatenus arch-bishop of Antioch, wherein it is to be observed, that the bishops assembled to examine the cause of Paulus, did not meet by any authority or summons from the bishop of Rome, but as pastors of the same common flock, to take care that the faith should receive no injury. In the next place, when they had judged him guilty of heresy, they did not wait for confirmation of their proceedings, or orders from the bishop of Rome how to proceed, but immediately pronounced sentence, by their own authority, of excommunication and deprivation against him, and presently made Domnus bishop of Antioch, in his place. When they had done this, they sent a synodical epistle to the chief bishops in the world, giving an account of their proceedings, that, as far as possible every thing might be done, with the full consent and approbation of the whole episcopal college. This epistle they directed "to Dionysius, bishop of Rome, Maximus bishop of Alexandria and all our fellow bishops, throughout the world, and to the whole catholic church under heaven." They also say, "we cited to Antioch, many other distant bishops, as the bishops of Alexandria, bishop of

* See Hickee's apologetical vindication of the church of England, in relation to schisms. Second edition, 1796.

Cesarea," &c. Now it is certain that these bishops bordering upon Antioch, pretended to no jurisdiction over the bishop of Alexandria, &c. so that this was no summons of authority, but of brotherly concern for the faith and universal flock of Christ. Hence we may compute the force of that argument brought for the supremacy of the Roman bishop, in his convening many bishops upon a like occasion. And this synodical epistle gives the bishop of Rome no other title than other bishops, calling them their "fellow bishops." No authority in the bishop of Rome than others, is so much as hinted at in this epistle, which is inconceivable, if they entertained that notion of this universal supremacy which has since prevailed, and which ought to have been exerted in such a case as the deprivation of the third bishop in the christian world. These Antiochian bishops give him notice, as well as other bishops, to direct no longer their communicatory letters to Paulus, whom they had deposed, but to Domnus whom they had elected in his place.

Here was the unity and security of the catholic church in those ages. It consisted in the mutual correspondence and good agreement of the bishops, the heads of the several churches.

I have now examined all the arguments that have been lately produced to prove the universal jurisdiction of the bishop of Rome in the first 300 years, and I think, have clearly shown, not only that such jurisdiction was then totally unknown, but that most of the arguments alleged to prove it, prove the direct contrary. This truth has been candidly confessed by several eminent persons of the Roman church: *Æneas Sylvius* afterwards *Pius II.* speaking of bishops, says that "before the council of Nice, each lived by himself, and the Roman church was but little regarded," Ep. 282. *Febronius* in his book *de Statu ecclesiæ*, 1763, dedicated to *Clement XIII.* p. 88.) acknowledges, "that while the apostles lived, as their acts testify, the catholic church was not governed by Peter as monarch, but by the apostles jointly with him. That the disciples of the apostles followed their example, is evident from the councils which were celebrated in imitation of that at Jerusalem. And from these, we may discern, that the bishops governed their particular churches, without consulting the bishop of Rome, in consulto Romano pontifice."

To supply this defect of evidence for the authenticity of the Roman bishop in the three first ages, the *decretal epistles* were impudently *forged* in the seventh or eighth century; and the *donation of Constantine*, wherein he gave away the Roman empire, and "all its rights to the pope. These false decretals which exalt the power of the bishops of Rome during the first three ages, to heaven itself, were universally believed as "the doctrine of purest antiquity" says Fleury, from the eighth to the end of the sixteenth century. "They made an incurable wound in the discipline of the church by the maxims they introduced concerning the judgments of bishops, and the pope's authority." Fleury Disc. p. 119. They were believed in the council of Trent, but are now every where rejected as spurious. Febron. de statu Eccl. p. 531.

But it may be enquired; what was the real extent of the *bishop of Rome's jurisdiction*.—To this we answer, that in the year 325, the government and subordination of the church was established in the council of Nice, "according to ancient customs;" but we read not of any authority possessed by the bishop of Rome, but within his own province, and such as the bishops of Alexandria and Antioch had in theirs; and it has been clearly proved by protestant and Roman writers, * that the 14 provinces of the Roman diocese were the legal bounds of the bishop of Rome's jurisdiction, both as a metropolitan and patriarch, and this Dupin ingenuously confesses, exempting Germany, Spain, France, Africa, Illyricum, and seven of the Italic provinces from any subjection to the jurisdiction of the Roman patriarch in those primitive ages.

It is very evident, as Dr. Cave remarks, † that the

* See Dupin de eccl. ant. disp. Bingham's works 6. s. c. 1. Johnson's yad. incoum., p. 126. 1714.

† Cave on ancient church gov. 1688. Bishop Parker on do. 1681. F. H.'s answer to Hawarden's true church. 1775. Uscusius de ecclesiârum statu. p. 28.—On the subject of the Roman bishop's *Primacy*, &c. in general councils, consult Richer's hist. concil. general. Cologne. 1688. in which the arguments of Bellarmine, Binus and Du Val, are particularly confuted; and Richardson's Praelections. Lond. 1726.—On the subject of *Appeals*, see Field on the church, p. 561. Barrow's works, p. 711 to 780. Morton's Grand impost, p. 262. *Seccesse de Rom. Pont. advers. Bellarm.* p. 181. Richerii hist. conc. gen. tom. 1. Richer judiciously remarks: *Magnum esse positum discrimen inter appellatum, atque per fugia clericorum.*—Bellarmine per fugium pro appellatione usurpat, et vocis equivocatione lectorem frustratur.

Bishop of Rome began very early to usurp a dominion over the church, and certainly none had a better opportunity to carry on such a design. He had an *honorary* precedence above all other bishops, because seated in the imperial city, the place of general resort. "Rome, says St. Cyprian, ep. 40. ought to have the presidency of Churches, on account of its magnitude." And in the council of Chalcedon, A. D. 452, it is alleged that "to the throne of ancient Rome, because it was the imperial city, the fathers (and not the apostles) justly gave the pre-eminence." They had on this account, a numerous and opulent clergy, and a pagan writer informs us that "their feasts exceeded the tables of kings," vide Ammian. Marcell. lib. 27. where he contrasts the poverty and humility of the country-bishops with the pride and pomp of the bishop of Rome. Basil (ep. 18.), more than once complains of "the arrogance of the West," and expresses a passionate resentment that he "hated the pride of that church." After the emperors became christians, the bishops of Rome were enriched with vast honours and privileges; hence they had opportunities to relieve their clients and dependents, which made many court their protection. By the advantage of the imperial city they were capable of sending out missionaries to remote parts of the world, and upon this foundation they built a claim to superiority and domination. Accordingly Sozomen observes, that long before his time, "the Roman episcopacy had advanced itself beyond the priesthood into a dynasty," lib. 7. 12. Furnished with these and many other advantages, says Dr. Cave, they set up for themselves, and gave not over, till they had spread such an ecclesiastical empire over the world (i. e. the Roman empire) as would admit neither superior nor equal.

Is it not plain, observes Dr. Geddes, * that the bishops of Rome, after they were in possession of that primacy bestowed on them as bishops of the imperial city, were still stretching it, and grasping after more jurisdiction than belonged to it, though for many years, but to little purpose? So in the fifth century they attempted to obtrude on the African churches, a decree of allowing appeals from them to the Roman see, as if it had been made at the council of Nice. But the African bishops

* Geddes's tracts vol. 2. p. 4. 1714.

to the number of 270 and St. Austin at their head, surprised at this new pretence; sent into Greece for authentic copies of the Nicene canons; which having examined, they sent letters to the bishop of Rome, informing him, "that the council of Nice had decreed that all causes should be determined in the places where they arose, and that it was unreasonable to think that God should enable a single person (at Rome,) to examine the justice of a cause; and deny his grace to a multitude of bishops assembled in synod," &c. From hence, as Dr. Cave argues, it follows, 1. that whatever power the bishop of Rome claimed in Africa, was founded on the canons, and not as successor of St. Peter. 2. The canons give the bishop of Rome no power over foreign churches, either to hear, or decide causes, or send legates with authority, "for this," say the African bishops "we do not find commanded by any synod of the fathers." 3. That the church of Africa, and accordingly every national church has an inherent power of determining all causes that arise within itself. 4. That appeals which they call *improba refugia*, were not allowed even to Rome; and they inform the bishop of Rome that his proceedings were so far from the humility and simplicity of the gospel, that they tended only to nourish "swelling pride and secular ambition in the church." Their epistle to the bishop of Rome, says bishop Stillingfleet, is a noble monument of the prudence, courage, and simplicity of the African bishops; enough to put any reasonable man out of the fond conceit of an universal pastorship of the bishop of Rome. I wonder not that cardinal Baronius says, there are some hard things in this epistle, that cardinal Perron sweats and toils so much to so little purpose to enervate the force of it, for as long as the records of it last, we have an impregnable bulwark against the usurpations of the church of Rome. Stilling. works, IV. 394.

But yet it is pretended that St. Austin did acknowledge the supremacy of the Roman bishop, because he styles him "bishop of the apostolic see."—Now every bishop's see was dignified with this title. Sidonius speaking of a French bishop, says, he sat 45 years in *apostolica sede*. lib. 6. Ep. 1. Jerom calls the bishop of Alexandria, "bishop of the apostolic see," adv. Vigil.

And Austin says in general, "the catholic church is diffused over the world by the *apostolic sees*, and the succession of bishops in them." Aug. ep. 42.—St. Austin, we may observe here, uses the same argument against the Donatists, that Irenæus &c. had used long before, viz. the succession of bishops in the apostolic churches. And because it would be too tedious to reckon the successions of bishops in all churches, ever since the apostles; "consult at least the succession of the church of Rome; numerate Sacerdotes *viz.* ab ipsa sede," &c.—If it be asked, * why he did not instance in the church of Carthage? Answer, 1. because the church of Rome was at that time the most famous in the world. 2. Because the Donatists objected against the church of Carthage, and other African churches, that the succession of bishops in them had been interrupted by traditors; but they could not pretend this against the church of Rome. In another place, he instances not only in the church of Rome, but in the church of Jerusalem, "in which James sat, and in which at this day John sits, with which we are joined in catholic unity," Cont. lit. Pet. l. 2. 54.

To give, says Mr. Crompton, to the church of Rome a primacy of order, and to deny it supremacy of dominion, was indeed Austin's religion, neither is it contradicted by the church of England. But to apply what he spoke of the state of the church in his time, to the state of the church in our time, is but weak philosophy and worse divinity. Let the church of Rome return to her ancient integrity, and to that state wherein she stood in St. Austin's time; I will not doubt, safely to repose myself in her lap; I'll dedicate my studies to patronize *her ancient purity*, but have always vowed myself an enemy to all pernicious and *schismatical novelty*. †

I proceed now to explain a passage of OPTATUS and ST. JEROM.—In reference to the first Opt. 2. cont. Parm. we must observe that the schismatical Donatists had set up at Rome, a bishop of their own sect. Now Optatus uses this as a proof of their schism at Rome, that at the time he wrote, there had been but 6 bishops of their sect at Rome, whereas the succession of the catholic bishops had continued from St. Peter to Siricus by law.

* Manning's short way, &c. p. 86. Dublin, 1804.

† Austin's religion, in answer to Brerely, p. 68. 1625.

ful election. Besides the Donatist bishops had no canonical election, but were sent over and thrust in by the Africans. From thence he shows the unlawfulness of setting up another chair, against that of St. Peter at Rome, i. e. that succession of bishops which was derived from him. Now, says he, (proceeding upon St. Cyprian's ground of one bishop in one church,) God intended that there should be but *one chair* in one place, i. e. that the several apostles should not, in the *same place*, set up a distinct succession of church governors, and therefore he is a schismatic, who against that *one chair*, erects another in *that place*. So that nothing could be plainer than that at Rome (about which the contest was) the chair could not belong to the Donatists, but to their adversaries. St. Austin uses the same argument against the Donatists, ep. 165. This argument served to prove which of the two were schismatics at Rome; but it is no infallible rule for all churches to be guided by, and give Rome a title to be instructor of the whole world. The see of Rome had, from the apostles to Optatus's days, shone in full lustre, as to be the most eminent church in the world; and if it had done so still, there might even *now* have been place for Optatus's words. But the change hath been so great, that I may well say with Priscus (in excerpt.) "The faith and government of the church of Rome was apostolic and pure, but the latter governors not being affected as they anciently were, have sorely corrupted it." Hammonds works, vol. 2. 122.

That Peter's chair was not the *only* one in the world, Optatus shows in his first book, where he speaks of the *chair* of St. Cyprian; and that he did not acknowledge any superior dominion in the Roman bishop is manifest, for he calls him (*socium*) his fellow bishop. As for necessity of union, it is no more required to Rome, than to the churches of Asia; for he adds "that the Donatists were schismatics for want of union with the churches of Asia;" and to the same purpose, he instances in the Corinthian, and Thessalonian churches. And to show the unity of all these apostolic churches, he adds that "all the world agreed with Sinicus in the intercourse of letters." So that nothing can possibly be inferred from these words of Optatus concerning the Roman church, but what would equally hold for any other apostolic church.—See my note in page 116.

As for that passage of JEROM's "*Ego cathedræ Petri communionem consocior, super illam petram ædificatam ecclesiam scio;*" even supposing that by the rock he meant Peter's chair, (though Erasmus was of opinion that he meant the faith Peter professed,) yet he meant his chair as *then* possessed by Damasus, who had till that time stood firm as a rock, against those assaults of heresy which had prevailed over the Eastern church.

But that he was far from thinking, that all his predecessors had done so, or that all his successors should, is sufficiently intimated in this epistle: for when he says, "*Now* in the West the sun of righteousness arises, but in the East lucifer which fell, has set his throne above the stars." That rising *Now* necessarily implies that he thought this *sun* had either set, or at least declined some time before: and this he elsewhere (Cat. Scrip. Ecc.) plainly expresses, when he tells us that Liberius bishop of Rome subscribed the Arian heresy; and if Liberius did not, it is certain Jerom believed he did; and therefore as certain, that he did not believe that the chair of Peter was then the rock; on which the church was built. And as he believed that the chair of Peter had been formerly corrupted by heresy, so he thought it not impossible, but it might do so again; yea, even that Damasus himself might fall into the Arian heresy; else why does he in this epistle so earnestly deprecate it? Had he foreseen the Council of Trent; he would doubtless have foretold the time, when this sun would come to suffer a dreadful eclipse in the Roman horizon.

But that these words, (*super illam petram, &c.*) are not to be confined to Peter and his see, Jerom himself teaches us in his Comment. in psal. 86. For upon these words "*her foundations are on the holy hills,*" he says that "*the foundations were the apostles: in them were the foundations, there was the faith of the church first placed, and there the foundations were laid.*" He does not say that Peter was the *only*, or the *most eminent* foundation, but merely that *the apostles were the foundations*. In his first Book against Jovinian, he expressly asserts, That the church is equally (*ex æquo*) founded upon them all. Once more, "*wherever, says he, there is a bishop, whether at Rome, or Eugubium, &c. he is of the same*

merit,* and the same priesthood. The power of riches, and the humility of poverty, cannot make a bishop higher or lower. But they are all successors of the apostles." Ep. ad Evagr. And could he have argued the equality of bishops, from their being the apostles successors, had he not taken it for granted, that the apostles themselves were equal? I shall add this only, that in case Jerom had been of opinion, that Peter had authority over the other apostles; yet that he acknowledged no such authority in the bishop of Rome over other bishops, is evident from this very epistle to Damasus, in which he calls the Egyptian confessors *his colleagues*.

There is nothing more evident, than that the bishops of Rome, (especially after the emperors became christians,) began very early to discover ambitious inclinations, and a desire of subjecting other bishops to them; but in this (as I have shown) they were always opposed and censured. Leo, in particular, never failed to exalt his own authority; and at the council of Chalcedon he contended with 630 bishops about the primacy of his see: See Richer. hist. conc. gen. I. 428, where he shows how the Roman bishops "*sibi pedetentim auctoritatem absolute statuendi de disciplina ecclesiastica attribuerere conati sunt.*" From thence we may perceive what little stress is to be laid on the *panegyrics*, which these aspiring bishops have so freely bestowed on their own see. Indeed *panegyrics* and *titles* of this nature are not to be depended on, least they militate as strongly against their cause, as for it. If Leo, who certainly was interested in his own cause, declares for the glory of his own see, does not Theodoret (Hær. fabul. l. 4. c. 12.) say of Nestorius of Constantinople, "that he was entrusted with the government of the catholic church of C. P. and thereby of the whole world." So Gregory Naz. says of Athanasius, that "he had the government of the people committed to

* In the third Roman synod under Symachus, this word *merit* is used for *power* and *principality* in the church; *Ejus sedis primum Petri apostoli meritum sive principatus, deinde conciliorum venerabilium auctoritas, &c.* where Binus confesses an account is given of the supremacy of the bishop of Rome, the first ground of which is St. Peter's merit or principality; apply this sense to Jerom, and he may be very easily understood: all bishops are, *eiusdem meriti sive principatus*, of the same merit, dignity, or authority in the church. Stillingfleet's works IV. 451.

him, that is, of the whole world," Or. 21. 392; and "that he had the care of all the churches," ap. Hieron. ad Pam. ep. 61. and that all churches fled to him, "as the head of the whole," Basil. ep. 53. So Avitus Vienneensis writes to a bishop of Jerusalem, "your apostleship exercises the primacy granted you by God, and desires to let the world see, that you possess the chief place in the universal church, not only by privilege, but by your merits." Epist. by Sirmond, 272. If this had been said of the bishop of Rome, it would have done that cause more service than all that has been collected from Leo, Boniface, or Prosper. But, as Dr. Claget says, if a Father does but bestow a compliment on the bishop of Rome, or upon the church of Rome, this shall be enough to make *him* the bishop of all bishops, and *her* the mistress of all churches. See also bishop Barlow's Brutum Fulmen, 1681; by these premises, says the bishop, I hope it may (and does) appear that all these honorary titles given to the bishop of Rome or his see, have been anciently given to ~~thousands~~, (*besides the bishop of Rome,*) who never had, or dreamed of any supremacy: though in these late and worst ages, they have been appropriated to the bishop of Rome, and, (though old and innocent titles) made use of to amuse and deceive the ignorant, to cover and give some colour and credit to new errors, and made arguments to prove (what they never can,) the bishop of Rome's supremacy.

I shall conclude with the following confession of Mr. Bower who had been once a jesuit, but died in the communion of the church of England. Speaking of his Lives of the popes, he says, This work I undertook some years since at Rome, and brought it down to the close of the second century. As I was then a most zealous champion for the pope's supremacy, my chief design was to ascertain that supremacy, by showing that from the apostles times to the present, it had been acknowledged by the catholic church. But alas! I soon perceived that I had undertaken more than it was in my power to perform. Nay, while in order to maintain this cause, I examined with particular attention the writings of the apostles, and of the many pious and learned men who had flourished in the three first centuries; I was so far from finding any thing that seemed the least to countenance such a doctrine, that, on the contrary, it appeared evident beyond a dis-

pute, that during the above-mentioned period of time, it had been utterly unknown to the christian world. In spite then of my endeavours to the contrary, I began to look upon the pope's supremacy, not only as a prerogative quite chimerical, but as the most impudent attempt that had ever been made : I say, in spite of my endeavours to the contrary ; for I was very unwilling to give up a point, upon which I had been taught by Bellarmin that the whole of christianity depended. But great is the power of truth, and at last it prevailed : I became a proselyte to the opinion which I had proposed to confute ; and sincerely abjured in my mind, that which I had undertaken to defend.

CHAP. XI.

Defence of the reformation of the church of England and Ireland.

FROM this examination of the scriptures and fathers of the purest ages, we may with the greatest truth and justice infer these two things, 1. That there was not in those ages, nor is there any necessity of a *visible head* to unite all the parts of the catholic church into one communion. 2. Nor any necessity that the whole catholic church should agree in all *rites and ceremonies*, which might be various in different churches, without any breach of communion. Nay, a considerable degree of variety in these matters is to be met with in the Roman church.*

The former was sufficiently provided for, by the agreement of all churches in the same faith, and the obligation that lay upon the whole college of bishops, as equal shares in one episcopacy, to give mutual assistance to each other in all things that were necessary to defend the faith, or preserve the unity of the church entire in all respects, when any assault was made on it. It was by

* Introd. to Protestant apology. p. 138. 1809.

this means, and not by any necessary recourse to any standing head, that the unity of the church was anciently preserved.

* In ancient writers, the *catholic church* is taken in two senses only : the *general* one, in which it was put for all faithful churches united into one body, under Christ ; and the *particular*, when it was used expressly or implicitly for a particular church, not upon account of its union and agreement with the Roman, but with the whole catholic church.

Thus, in the *general* sense, Theophylact on 1. Cor. 12. "The catholic church dispersed through the whole world, whose body consists of all churches every where, having Christ, (not any one bishop,) for its head."—A synod of Egyptian bishops being met in council at Alexandria, direct a circular letter thus : "the synod convened from Egypt, Thebais, Pentapolis, and Lybia, send greeting in the Lord, to the bishops of the catholic church in all places." Athan. apol. vol. 1. 722.—So St. Basil, ep. 303. "all those who believe in Christ are one people, and there is but one church of Christ, though in different places."—So the church of Smyrna in the inscription of their epistle, in Euseb. ecc. hist. lib. 4. c. 15. "To all the dioceses of the catholic church in every place." So St. Austin, Ep. to Sever. "The catholic church (not the Roman catholic church) is diffused far and wide throughout the world." So in his Observations on the creed, "we believe the holy church, i. e. the *catholic*, for both heretics and schismatics call their congregations Churches," &c. but if the Roman, or Roman catholic church be the same with the catholic church, it is surprising, that neither he, nor Rufinus, nor Cyril, nor any other ancient expositor of the creed, should omit to acquaint the christian world with such a fundamental meaning of "I believe the catholic church !" May, I wonder that the Nicene fathers should not give that explanation of it in the Nicene creed, if the Roman church were indeed the church of Christ in its general sense, or the catholic church mentioned in the creed.—"From Christ, says St. Cyprian, ep. 56. the one church was divided over many members." In like manner, there is one episcopacy diffused (through the

* See Dr. Hickes's admirable Letters to a popish priest, p. 64. vol. 1. 1705. Stillingfleet's works IV. 287. and VI. 667.

church) in an united number of many bishops."—So Tertullian, "so many and so great churches, are that one, and first church of the apostles, from which all are derived," &c. and he always speaks of the church of Rome as a particular church, (*habes Corinthum, Romanum, &c.*).

As for the explicit use of *the catholic church*, and *the church*, for *particular churches*, nothing is more common, as in St. Clement's epistle (who was bishop of Rome,) to the church of Corinth: "the church of God which is at Rome, to the church of God which is at Corinth."—So the church of Smyrna, in their epistle, concerning the martyrdom of Polycarp their bishop: "the church of God which is at Smyrna, to that at Philomelium, and to all the districts of the catholic church, grace, peace, and the love of God the father, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, be multiplied."—So in Athanasius's works I. 779. "Constantine the great emperor, to the people of the catholic church of Alexandria;" and in the same epistle, "against the catholic church in Egypt;" but not to signify its union with the church of Rome, more than *any other* part of the catholic church.—So in the beginning and end of his will, Gregory Nazianzen, calls the church of Constantinople, the catholic church: "Gregory, bishop of the holy catholic church of C. P."—

In like manner, the ancients had no other notion of THE CHURCH OF ROME in its purest state, but as ONE PARTICULAR CHURCH, which was a part of the whole, of which Christ only was the head. "In the nine first centuries, (says a Dr. of Sorbonne,*) in which eight general councils had met; it was never heard or read, that the Roman church was taken in any other

* Richerii Hist. Concil., l. p. 65. 754. Colon. 1688. Nilus Archiepiscopus Thessalonicensis contra primatum papæ Nectarius patriarch of Jerusalem against the pope's supremacy, in answer to Dom Petre, 1702. p. 6. At the time of the Co. of Chalcedon, A. D. 451. says Richer, it was not at all the same to be admitted to the communion of the *Roman*, and to the communion of the *catholic church*: for although Leo had admitted Theodoret to the *Roman* communion, yet he was not admitted to the *catholic* communion till after the decree of the Co. of Chalcedon: "unde claret, tum Romanam ecclesiam, ut revera est, habitam pro singulari and particulari, non pro universali ecclesia; hoc enim commentum est hominum obnoxiorum," tom. 1. 416.

tion or signification, than for a particular church, and a member of the church universal, as the other patriarchal churches were, which were also called apostolic sees, as well as that of Rome." It is evident also, from the titles given to the bishops of Rome, that the church of Rome was always looked upon in ancient times as a particular church. In the fragments of Hilary, there is this address of Liberius, "to our most beloved brethren and fellow bishops in the east, Liberius bishop of the city of Rome."—In the fifth century "Zosimus bishop of the city of Rome, to Hesychius, bishop of Salonia." So "Julius and Liberius, bishops of Rome." Cont. Arian. 1. p. 291.—St. Cyprian calls the bishops of Rome his colleagues, brethren, co-bishops, Ep. 9. 55, 72, 57. There are many more authorities of this kind in Launoy's Ep. ad Formentinum, where he confutes Bellarmin, and proves the bishop of Rome to be but one particular bishop of the catholic church, because when a pope dies, there is only a vacancy of the church of Rome, but not of the catholic church.—Because you Latins, says Barlaam the Greek monk, profess to believe in the Roman church and Roman faith, and force others so to believe, it concerns us to discourse of this matter. Our holy fathers speak in a different manner of the Roman church and the catholic church. For when they speak of the *catholic church*, they understand the congregation of all christians throughout the world, who keep the doctrines of religion entire and unchanged. But when they speak of the *Roman church*, they speak of it as the council of Carthage did in the 104th canon, to distinguish it from other particular churches in the world, in this manner: "it is resolved that letters be written to the most holy Innocent, about the difference that is arisen between the church of Rome and Alexandria, that both churches may keep the peace between themselves, which Christ hath commanded." For no man instead of saying the *catholic church*, ever said the *Roman church*. In like manner when they speak of the catholic faith, they mean that faith which all orthodox christians in all places profess. And no man who is not mad, ever called the christian faith, the Roman faith. For we are commanded not to believe in the Roman faith and church, but in the common catholic faith and church, which faith and profession

we have kept, and will keep by God's help unto the end.*

But now it is the common practice of Roman writers, to take for granted, that the present church of Rome, (in which I include the churches in communion with it,) is either expressly or by implication the whole catholic church, or the one holy catholic church, of which were it as pure and sound as in St. Peter's time, it could only be a *part*, and in St. Clement's epistle above cited it is spoken of as such. But now it is so corrupt, that it is not so much as a part of *the one holy catholic church* but only a part of *the church universal* in the larger and most improper sense of the word.†

In the primitive church, if a bishop fell into manifest heresy or idolatry, not only the *people* were obliged in point of duty to separate, but the *bishops* of other churches were obliged to withdraw from his communion; See several instances of this in Barrow's works, 1, 746, and Bramhall's works, p. 57. The case is the same with the bishop of Rome; for if other bishops, who are reckoned successors of the apostles, and vicars of Christ within their precinct; if other patriarchs who sit in apostolic sees, and partake of a like extensive jurisdiction, by incurring heresy or schism, may be deprived of their authority, then may the bishop of Rome lose his; for truth and piety are not affixed to the chair of Rome, more than to any other; in this case, any other bishop was not only at liberty to *dissent* from him, but was obliged by virtue of his share in the common episcopacy, to *separate* from him, and if occa-

* See archbishop Usher's sermon on the universality of the church, p. 8.—Herein, p. 7. of all others do our Romanists most fearfully offend; as being the authors of the most cruel *schisms*, that hath ever been seen in the church of God.

† The *church universal* or *catholic* taken in a large extent comprehends all societies of professed christians whatsoever, heretics, schismatics, idolaters, &c. as they are distinguished from infidels; but *the one catholic church* contains those churches only, which profess the true faith, worship, and government, and to which this term *catholic* was early applied, to distinguish the *cetus fidelium* from the congregations of heretics and schismatics. It was also called *the visible church*, and in this sense it is used in our 19th article, and throughout this treatise. See Hickes's letters, 1. 96. This distinction is maintained in Hawarden's Charity and Truth, p. 19, 1809.

sion required to pronounce *anathema* against him : so St. Hilary did against Liberius, upon his defection to the Arians, Hil. fragm. 134. In the time of Victor, the whole eastern church forbore communion with the bishop of Rome, who was guilty of a schismatical act ; Epiph. hær. 70. Firmilian, archbishop of Cesarea told Stephen of Rome, that by thinking to excommunicate others, he had excommunicated himself. The fathers of the Antiochian synod, threatened to excommunicate Julius of Rome ; " they promised to him communion, if he admitted those whom he expelled ; but if he resisted their decrees, they denounced the contrary ;" Sozom. 8. 8. Acacius of C. P. renounced the communion of Felix. * The African bishops synodically excommunicated Vigilus, and so did the bishops of Illyricum.†—All this evidently proves, that they did not imagine any single person to be the centre of union to the whole church ; or that all churches were obliged to be in communion with the bishop of Rome, whether he was a catholic or heretic ; or that any church out of his metropolitcal power, was bound in any respect to submit to his jurisdiction ; but it manifestly proves the contrary, that there was no necessity of a visible head, as is now pretended in the church of Rome, to unite all the parts of the catholic church into one communion ; but that in matters of *faith*, every bishop was as

† *Africani antistes Vigilium Romanum Episcopum damnatorem capitulum, synodali a catholica communione, reservato ei penitentia loco, recludunt.* Vict. Tun. chron. 10.

† The popish editor of the Bib. Pat. Lovan. 1661, grants, " possunt subditi resistere papæ, (i. e. Romano episcopo), publice in hæresim lapsæ." This note is on the words of Columbanus : " I beseech you, (says he, to Boniface of Rome) since many doubt of the purity of your faith, that you will remove this scandal ; for otherwise your juniors will deservedly resist you ; and they do resist you deservedly ; and deservedly they do not join in communion with you." O'Connor's 2d. letter, 1810. p. v. According to Dr. O'Connor, the bishop of Rome has a *divine right* to call prelates to order, and declare them schismatical, whenever they are guilty of violating the faith, &c. yet in the next sentence he allows that his subjects may and ought to resist him when he falls into heresy. We may put the old popish questions here, who is to be judge in such cases ? the governors or the governed ? and how can authority be without infallibility ? No wonder that Spadini discovered the absurdity of this, on popish principles, p. vi.

much a guardian of the whole church as the bishop of Rome ; and in matters of *discipline*, all churches were at liberty to hear and determine their own causes in a synod of bishops, without having recourse to any foreign jurisdiction.

Hence appears the absurdity of asserting, "that we separated from the catholic church." For we know it never can be proved that the church of Rome is the catholic church; and whatever church or churches have corrupted the faith and worship of Christ, we shall make no scruple at all to separate from them in such corruptions, and we have the whole gospel to justify us in it ; for in such cases, we are under the same obligation to separate, that we are to profess the true faith, and practise the true worship of Christ. All that can be charged upon the church of England and Ireland, is that they renounced the supremacy of the bishop of Rome, and denied obedience to that see, which never had any divine right to claim it : and that they reformed those errors in doctrine, and corruptions in worship, which they were formerly guilty of. This charge we readily own, but deny that this is schism, or separation from the catholic church.

For till they can prove, that the unity of the catholic church consists in subjection to the bishop of Rome, it is ridiculous to charge us with breaking catholic unity, by denying that obedience which we do not owe, and when they can prove it *essential* to catholic unity, to submit to the bishops of Rome, as the visible head of the church, we will own ourselves to be schismatics. But then I must remind them what they are to prove, viz. that *by divine institution*, the bishop of Rome is the visible head of unity, to whom all churches must submit ; for nothing can be *essential* to the unity of the church ; but what Christ himself has made so ; and what is not absolutely essential, may be changed and altered, when there is *absolute necessity* for it, without a sinful breach of unity.

Accordingly this *usurpation* of the bishop of Rome, was renounced and disclaimed in the time of Henry the VIIIth. first by both universities, and most of the greatest monasteries in England ; and it was determined by the (popish) bishops in convocation, A. D. 153. "that it was many hundred years, before the bishop of Rome could acquire any power of a primate over any other

bishops, which were not within his province of Italy; and that the bishops of Rome do now transgress their own profession made at their creation; for they solemnly vow, that they shall inviolably preserve all the ordinances made in the eight first general councils, among which it is especially provided, that all causes shall be determined within the province where they began, and that, by the bishops of the same province; which absolutely excludes all papal, i. e. foreign power out of these realms.

Beside the testimony of scripture, and the ancient church, we have also the consent of all the churches of the East,* which however different among themselves, to this day, look on the bishop of Rome's supremacy as an

* In all these vast churches, the two effects (Apostle's and Nicene, but not pope Pius's), are professed, true baptism administered, and an undoubted succession of bishops from the apostles, and although they have some errors and corruptions, yet if they be not fundamental, and not enjoined as necessary to be approved in order to their communion, we may lawfully communicate with them. That they are neither Nestorians nor Eutychians is clearly proved by bishop Stillingfleet, vol. 6, p. 677, and 4. p. 1. The Syrian churches in Malabar were lately visited by Dr. Buchanan. He informs us, (Gent. Mag. 1807,) that there are fifty-five churches in Malabar, acknowledging the patriarch of Antioch; that they are not Nestorians, and their doctrines are not at variance, in essentials, with the doctrines of the church of England. Their bishop, after conferring with his clergy, delivered the following opinion:—"That an union with the English church, or at least, such a connexion as should appear to both churches practicable and expedient, would be a happy event; and favourable to the advancement of religion." A late Romanist (Howard. Char. and Truth. 274.) acknowledges that of those (falsely) called Nestorians, there are 300,000 families; of Eutychians, 100,000 families; of Semi-Eutychians, in all 170,000 families, and the Armenian patriarch has in all 260 bishops under him; besides the vast number of christians in Ethiopia, Abyssinia, Greece, Turkey, &c.—Nothing can be more rooted and invincible (Mosheim 5, 246.) than the aversion there in general discover to the Romish church; and which has continued inflexible amidst the most zealous efforts of the Roman pontiffs, and the various means employed by their numerous missionaries to gain over this people to their communion.—The Armenians (says Jesuit Averil, Travels 1693, p. 149.) declared all excommunicated who should come to our assemblies.—Cerrini, secretary to Innocent XI, confesses that when the Persians are convinced of the falsity of Mahometanism, instead of embracing the catholic religion (i. e. popery) they profess Atheism; and that the Greeks educated at Rome, turn schismatics, and become more violent enemies to us (papists), after they become

innovation on the church, and usurpation on the rights of the other patriarchs and bishops.

But it is objected from St. Austin, "that there is no sufficient cause for dividing unity."—But this he does not speak *absolutely*, but only in the particular case, which he treats of; lib. 2. cont. Parm. But he does not say that in other cases there can be no sufficient cause. This is confessed also by Mr. Knot, (*Infidelity unmasked*, p. 534.) "They who first separated themselves from the primitive pure church, and brought in corruptions in faith, liturgy, and use of sacraments, may truly be said to have been heretics, by departing from the pure faith, and schismatics, by dividing themselves from the external communion of the uncorrupted church." We maintain that the present church departed from the ancient primitive Roman church, not locally, but morally, which is worse, by introducing corruptions in faith, liturgy and sacraments, whereby they did both divide themselves schismatically from the external communion of the true primitive uncorrupted church of Christ, and became the cause of all following separation. *Dramhall's works*, 56. 68.

But it is objected that "we charge the church of Rome with idolatry, which is inconsistent with a christian church."—But we must distinguish here, between a *pure* and a *true or real* church.—Now it is essential to a church *pure* in doctrine and *pure* in worship, not to teach and practise idolatry, even as essential or necessary it is to a sound man not to have the leprosy or plague. But to a church only *true* in a metaphysical sense, i. e. to a *real* church, it is not essential or necessary not to practise idolatry, no more than it is to a real man, not to have the leprosy or plague. In this sense we say that a church may be guilty of some kinds of idolatry, and of very great corruptions in faith and worship, yet may be a *real* or ** true*, though not a right sound or *pure* church. I say

acquainted with our imperfections. *State of Religion*, translated from Italian, 1716, p. 51. 99. He also cautions us to give little credit to the relations of the Romish missionaries, for according to their custom they give no other account, but that they have converted thousands, p. 79. 186.—See also, *Smith's state of the Greek church*, 1686, and *Cowell's do.* 1723.

* In this sense of a *true* church, and in this only, must be understood the quotations in the late Protestant Apology, chap. 2. in which the author, taking advantage of our writers styling the church of Rome a *true* church, endeavours to make his rea-

may be, because some heresies and idolatry may be of such a nature, as not to amount to apostasy, or denial of God or Christ. Thus the *Jewish* church was guilty of idolatry in the worship of the golden calf, and the calves at Dan and Bethel, &c. yet was a true church still, because they worshipped the true God, though in an idolatrous manner. Their crime was not wholly leaving God for Baal, but worshipping Baal and Moloch as well as God, "you have offered me sacrifices these forty years, O house of Israel, but you have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch," &c. Wherefore, if not to practise idolatry be essential to the being of a church, then both the church of Jerusalem and Israel several times lost their being, and God, as to human appearance had no church among the Jews. In like manner the heretical idolatrous *Arian* church overspread the face of the empire, and was diffused through the oriental and occidental churches, and almost all the Latin churches turned Arian, yet their heresy or idolatry did not destroy their being as churches, or render them incapable of being reformed.*

We may observe too, that when holiness is attributed to the visible church, it cannot signify internal holiness, for good and bad men are intermixed in the church; and if the church must be holy in this sense, all the members of it must be impeccable as well as infallible. But holiness signifies either their state or profession; that they are in covenant with God; and so his holy and peculiar people, as the Jews were under the *Mosaic* covenant, who are therefore upon this account called a *holy nation*, even when they were guilty of idolatry, and had few visible marks of holiness in their lives: and for the same reason, the *Christian* church, which now succeeds into the privileges

den believe that we acknowledge her to be a *pure* church; thus says the learned Hickes, you pervert our unskilful people with your fallacies; you seduce our straying sheep from our safe to your pernicious fold, from the catholic church of England, to your uncatholic church, with *ambiguous* sounds of words, for which you must one day give account to God: Hickes's letters, l. 158. Bingham's introduction, 2. 804.

* Item quando Arianismus venenarum non jam portuaverat quendam, sed pene orbem totum contaminaverat; adeo ut prope cunctis Latini sermonis episcopis, partim vi, partim fraude deceptis caligo quaedam mentis offunderetur, &c. Vincent. lirin. Com. c. 6. vid. Faustini libellum præcum. Insuper totus orbis, et Arianismus esse miras est. Hieron. adv. Jovin.

ges of the Jewish synagogue, are called *saints*, the *chosen people of God*, to signify that God owns none for his people; but those who are admitted into the christian covenant. And in this sense, no church can cease to be a holy church, without ceasing to be a church.—Now suppose the church of Rome were the whole church, and had for some centuries been guilty of idolatry in the worship of saints, and images, and the V. Mary; yet they belong to the holy church, just as they belong to the church; by retaining the true faith of Christ, they are a *true* church, though the many errors they have added, make them a *very corrupt* church; and thus by professing the holy faith and owning the great principles of holiness, they are a *holy* church, though their holiness may be far from being perfect and uncorrupt, as well as their faith.

But to prove the inconsistency of idolatry and a christian church, the text 2. Cor. 6, 15, 16. is quoted, “what agreement hath the temple of God with idols.”—If then idolatry destroys the very being of a church, because there is no agreement between the temple of God and idols: why shall not every unrighteousness or sin likewise destroy the being of a church? Since “there is no fellowship between righteousness and unrighteousness; no communion between light and darkness;” &c. 14. This is the argument by which Petitioner the Deonist endeavoured to annul all other baptism, and to unchurch all other christians besides his own sect, because he pretended they communicated with wicked men. There is indeed no agreement between idolatry and a true church; no more is there between her and any other sin. But things that have no agreement do not immediately destroy one another. It doth not follow therefore, that to teach and practise any sin, destroys the very being of a church.*

“But if the church of Rome be guilty of damnable errors, how does Christ perform his promise to his church, “that the *gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*”—But *what* *does* signify *only* destruction; for *hades* is properly the state of dead men, who are laid under ground, and appear no more in this world; and there-

* Bp. King's 1st answer to Manby, p. 60. Bp. Stillingfleet's works, vol. V. and answer to Cuthbert on idolatry. Pref. as popery. tit. IV. Hickes's letters, L p. 143.

fore the meaning of this text is, that there shall always be a church in the world, professing that faith which here Peter had professed, and whereon Christ promised to build his church; viz. That Jesus Christ is the son of the living God. And such a church there has been ever since; and the church of Rome itself, notwithstanding all the corruptions that are in it, is such a church.

But that the church may be overrun with great and damning errors, is evident from St. Paul's prediction of the apostasy of the latter days, "when the man of sin shall be revealed, the son of perdition, who as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God," 2^d Thess. 2. 4. For whosoever this man of sin is, he sits in the temple of God, i. e. in the true church of Christ; and while the man of sin sits in the church, we need not doubt, but he brings some damning errors with him; and yet it is the temple of God, even when he sits there.—For the true explanation of the text 1 Tim. 3. 15. which is proved from the fathers to relate to Timothy, see Stillingfleet's vind. of answer. to K. Charles's papers, works VI. 689. and bishop Patrick's pillar of truth. Preserv. tit. 4. 75.—But "Christ has promised to be with his apostles and to abide with them for ever." Now for ever as it relates to an infallible direction, must be appropriated to the apostles, otherwise all their successors must be infallible, which will not serve the designs of the church of Rome. For were there no successors of the apostles but at Rome? How comes this promise to be limited to the church of Rome; and the bishops of Jerusalem, Antioch, and all the other eastern churches (where the bishops as certainly succeeded the apostles, as at Rome itself) not to enjoy the equal benefit of this promise? We must farther recollect, that this promise of general assistance was made to the apostles and their successors, upon condition that they were to teach the people to observe those things only which Christ had commanded them, Mat. 28. 20; which they would do well to reconcile with the practice of their own church, who coin at their pleasure new articles of faith; and some of those directly contrary to what Christ and his apostles have expressly commanded.*

* Tully's exam. of texts for infallibility, in answ. to Guide in controver., Touchstone, and Cath. Scripturist. Preserv. Tit. IV.

Some of the successors of the apostles have not performed these conditions. The churches of Sardis, Pergamus and Thyatira, the Persian and African churches, were once true churches, but they have been utterly destroyed. Christ himself will so defend his catholic church, that it shall neither quite fall away from him, by falling off from the ancient catholic and apostolic faith and ministry; nor be quite extinguished by persecution, but he will always have a church upon earth, which shall retain the apostolic faith and ministry, by tradition and succession from the apostles, though both the Romish church and ours had lost their being, and become no churches, by heresy, apostasy, or persecution. * He can plant as glorious a church in the south, as he once had in the north of Africa; he can call the Hotentots and Tartars, and most savage Americans, as easily as he did the Goths and Britons to the faith; and all this he can do, though your church were no more; and all that he is obliged to do by the promises of indefectibility or perpetuity, is somewhere or other to have a pure church upon earth; I mean, so pure that one may communicate in it without sin. To conclude with the Roman Dr. Hawarden: Christ has engaged his word, that his church shall always be visible. But he never promised that it should not be violently persecuted or oppressed: much less that no part of it (as a provincial or national church,) shall ever be cut off.†

It is pretended that "protestants must allow, that before Luther, the great body of christians in communion with the bishop of Rome, was the visible catholic church." You call it *the great body*, observes Dr. Hickey, but it matters not how great it was, if it was in the wrong, as the *great body* of the *Israelites* was in the times of Jeroboam and Ahab, and the *great body* of the *African christians* in the time of Augustus and Optatus, and the *great body* of the christians in the whole *Roman empire* in the reign of Valens, when Arianism, like an inundation, covered the face of the church. But we never allow, that the church of Rome was the visible catholic church, for, a long time before Luther, the greatest part of Christendom was neither in communion with, nor under the obedience of the bishop of Rome, against whose spiritual monarchy the Greek and

* Hickey's letters, 167.

† Hawarden's church of Christ, part 2. chap. 3.

Oriental churches did and still do protest. In ancient times, as I have shown before, the church of Rome was never considered but as a particular church; but it is the practice of Romish writers to pretend that the catholic church depended, for her catholicism and unity, on the single church of Rome and her bishop, and that all who separated from this body were accounted schismatics; "But in this sense of catholic, (says our learned king Charles I.) other churches might be called the catholic church, as well as the Roman, and particularly the Greek church, which has infused as much universality into the whole body of the catholic church, as the church of Rome has done, and was both centre and circumference as much as ever she was." The truth is, in the primitive ages, when all churches were in mutual communion with each other, and all these churches taken together were the true catholic church, then it might be truly said of every mother church, as well as Rome: for instance, the single church of Antioch, and all that were in communion with her, were the catholic church. Other churches then were no more, or in any other manner in communion with the church of Rome, than she was with them; nor was any one of them then esteemed the centre of communion, that infused unity into all the rest; and those who separated from this body, or from any member of it, as well as from the church of Rome, were accounted schismatics.*

But is objected that the church of England has not been *always*, or at all times.—It hath not been always, says Dr. Hickey to his adversary, neither as a formed nor a reformed church, nor hath the church of Rome been

* Bellarmine's and Cameracensis's definition of the catholic church, (viz. the union of all churches under the bishop of Rome,) is fully and most learnedly confuted by Dr. Leunoy, in his epistle to N. Gatinens, (edit. Cantab. 1689, p. 763). This accurate writer, as F. Walducalle him, unanswerably proves that the primitive definition of the church, was *Contra Ideliū*, the congregation of all faithful churches united into one apostolic communion of doctrine, worship, and government, under one supreme head Jesus Christ; and truly observes, that Bellarmine's new definition is accommodated to the present state of the church, (meaning the *popish* anarchy of the church,) but not to the nature, constitution, and interest of the church of Christ.

always either as a *formed* or a *reformed* church. But what then? May not a church be catholic, that was not always from the beginning of christianity, if it teaches and holds all catholic doctrines, that antiquity taught in all churches with one consent? According to your reasoning a church cannot be a catholic church because it was not always; then there never was any catholic church but that of Jerusalem (Luke 24. 47. Acts 14) which was the first of all christian churches. Nor could the church of England, which you suppose to be heretical, by consequence from your answer, become or recommence catholic, although she should (which God forbid) return to your church. But your reasoning is entirely contrary to Tertullian, de presc. c. 81. "In this manner will they be tried by those churches, which though they cannot show any apostle, or apostolic man for their founder, as being much later and founded every day; yet agreeing in the same faith are reputed no less apostolic for the consanguinity of their faith;" so by this rule, the most ancient churches are no longer to be called, or accounted apostolic; and catholic, than they keep to that faith without innovations, mixtures, and additions, and teaching for doctrines the commandments of men, as your church hath done.—And although Bellarmin makes the *succession of bishops* the fifth mark of a true church yet he immediately subjoins as his sixth mark, *their agreement in doctrine with the primitive church*; we may remark here, that by this sixth mark we gain this advantage, that all those blustering claims to infallibility must be laid aside, till it appears that they require the same doctrine, and no other, than what was taught and believed by the primitive church; for according to this mark, it does not appear which the true church is, till it first appears that it agrees with the primitive. And we desire nothing more than to have the matter brought to this issue, Whether the doctrine and discipline of the church of England and Ireland or of the Romish church, agree best with the primitive.—By this rule, the doctrine of our church will be found to be truly primitive and catholic, taught by Christ and his apostles, owned by the primitive church, and received by all catholic churches to this day; which is as complete and perfect a succession as any doctrine can have; therefore when the church of Rome asks us, Where was our religion before Luther? we tell them, it was all the world

never, all catholic churches believed what we do, though we do not believe all that they do; they themselves did, and do to this day, own our creeds and articles of faith, excepting such as are directly opposed to their innovations.

So that we are on a sure foundation, our Faith has been received in the catholic church in all ages. But now the church of Rome cannot show such a succession for her new doctrines and articles of faith, which were unknown to the primitive church for many ages, which were rejected by many flourishing churches since the first appearance of them, which never had a quiet possession in her own communion, and were never formed into articles of faith, till the packed synod of Trent.

But it will be urged, that "reformation should have been done by common consent in a General Council, and that such was the Council of Trent." We answer, that this was most earnestly desired and insisted on by the first reformers, but when a pretended council (of Trent) was called, it was so far from being free or general, that it was called by the famous abbot of St. Cyran, "a cabal of schoolmen influenced by the pope," (Prejures leg. cont. Jansenism. 135.) There were many cardinal titular bishops in it; who had no subsistence but the pope's purse; and of the whole number that sat in it, there were more Italian bishops by one hundred and four, than of all the christian world besides; and by such a majority, his infallibility might infallibly assure himself to have determined whatever he pleased. On the contrary, says Dr. Hickey, we follow both the example and guidance of the church. Its example in making use of our own right to call a national synod for reformation, when we could not obtain it by a general council, and its guidance, in making scripture expounded by catholic tradition, our rule of faith. We follow antiquity, universality, and consent, and therefore we follow the church, the primitive church; to her and her general councils we appeal against you, and

The hulkiness and vanity of the Trent council, has been repeatedly proved both by Protestant and Romish writers. See bishop Stratford's discourse, against R. H's. 5th disc. in Guide in controversies; with a defence of F. Paul against Henricus and Pallavicini; Pres. Tit. L.—Bishop Stillingfleet's works. v. p. 457. F. Paul's History, Ranchins Review of the council, 1688.

your particular council of Trent, and by the universal doctrines of the fathers, we often, we desire to be tried.

But we are asked, "How a *national church* can consist in unity, where there is not a foreign judge from whom there can be no appeal?" But how do foreign appeals tend to the peace of a church? They have been always complained of in the best ages of the church, and by the best men, such as St. Cyprian, St. Augustine, and the African churches. And our ancestors for many years before the reformation, found the intolerable inconveniences of foreign appeals; whereby the nation was exhausted, justice obstructed, the clergy oppressed, and the king's prerogative greatly diminished. But have they, who make this objection, never heard of the power of metropolitans settled by the council of Nice, for governing the churches, and calling provincial synods? Or of the decrees of the council of Ephesus, forbidding all encroachments on the *ancient rights of churches*? Or that provincial councils have declared matters of faith, without so much as even consulting with the bishop of Rome? As the African councils did in the Pelagian controversy, and the council of Toledo* in the case of Arianism? "Is there the

* This is a remarkable precedent, which vindicates the proceeding of our Reformation. The Gothic nation had been infected with Arianism 218 years, when by the means of Leander bishop of Sevil, the king Recaredus being duly instructed in the orthodox faith, called a council at Toledo, A. D. 589, wherein Arianism was renounced by the declaration and subscription of the king, bishops, and great men; after which the council proceeded to make new canons, which the king confirmed by his edict, declaring, "that if any bishop, priest or deacon, refused to observe them, he should be excommunicated; if any of the higher rank of the laity, the penalty was paying half their estates to the exchequer, (if others) confiscation and banishment." Some of the later Spanish historians are much troubled to see every thing done in this Reformation, by the king, bishops, and great men, without the least mention of the bishop of Rome's authority. Lucas Tudensis therefore, says "that Leander was the pope's legate," but Mariana confesses, "the very acts of the council contradict it." He would have it believed, "that they sent legates to the pope, to have the council confirmed by him: but Mariana acknowledges, "that nothing appears in history to that purpose;" and if any such thing had been, it would not have been omitted in the epistles of Gregory, who wrote to Leander a letter of congratulation for the conversion of Recaredus. But *the national churches* were supposed to have power enough to reform themselves, provided

that Pontep, says abbe Flaury, of the pope's consent or permission in those councils which Tertullian, St. Cyprian, and Eusebius make mention of. 1. Was there any mention of him in those three great councils held at Alexandria, upon the affair of Arius, before the council of Nice? 2. When by the council of Nice, it was ordained to hold two councils every year in each province, was it supposed they were always to send to Rome to ask leave of the pope? And how could they send thither so frequently from the farthest parts of Asia and Africa? 3. In compliance however with this new maxim (of apostasy) after the twelfth age, scarce any councils were held, but the pope's legates presided at them. Flaury's discourses, p. 214.

It is pretended, "that our church can never justly charge *schism* with disobedience to her, because they may object that she disobeyed the Roman church."—But the force of this depends on a *double mistake*. 1. That the church of Rome has as much authority over our church, as the rulers of it have over the members. 2. That the sectaries have as much reason to reject the terms of communion required by our church, as our church had to reject those of the church of Rome.

As for that objection, which has been of late so much insisted upon, "that notwithstanding the *liberty* our church gives to private christians to examine her doctrines by scripture, yet she *peremptorily* requires *assent* to her faith and worship."—This indeed is as far from being unreasonable, that for the same reason that she does the one, she may and ought to do the other; i. e. because she is certain that the conditions of her communion are justifiable to the world, therefore she should neither fear to insist upon them, nor to provoke all persons to the examination of them by any proper methods. Our church has fixed terms of communion truly catholic, and to prevent any dangerous mistakes by the artifices of seducers, allows the assistance of those spiritual guides, which

that they proceeded according to the decrees of the four general councils.—And this is what we maintain in behalf of our church, that it receives all the *creeds* which were then received, and hath reformed those *abuses* only, which have crept into the church since that time. Stillingf. *Ans. to Cath. no idolaters*, pres. and *Godol's tracts*, 2. p. 2; 1714.

* *Answered to pret. apol. p. 59. et p. 87. 44.*

God has appointed in his church; for the government and instruction of private persons. Yet at the same time we are to use the liberty of judging, whether the terms of communion are catholic or not, under this consideration, that we are to be accountable for it at the day of judgment. If the losing of this church's communion were all the penalty we are in danger of, by refusing her terms, this were but a small obligation to consider well, whether there was just cause to refuse them or not. But when the penalty of making a wrong judgment against the church, will be no less than condemnation at the last day, we think reasonable men cannot lie under a greater obligation to take care, that they proceed in their search after truth with all care and sincerity. This is the provision that God hath made for the maintaining of truth and peace in his church, viz. that governors cannot abuse their authority in commanding; nor the people their liberty of judging whether the command can be obeyed with a good conscience, but at the peril of their souls. Notwithstanding which provision, there are *schisms* in the church, which we cannot wonder at; because God has not thought fit to provide against them, by means that would infallibly secure peace and truth, any more than to secure the piety and virtue of every believer by irresistible causes.

Obj. "But do we not see how many *heresies* and *schisms* have been occasioned by admitting *private judgment*? And is it possible to cure this without an *infallible judge*?" To this I answer, that there were many schisms and heresies in the purest ages of the church, even in the *apostles* times, who lamented the damnable heresies they saw creeping into the church; and used frequent and vehement exhortations to unity. Why did they in their infallible writings direct particular christians to "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good," if the judgment of matters of faith, were so given to the church, that others without farther inquiry, are bound to submit to their sentence? In the *ages* immediately *ucceeding the apostles*, the church was miserably rent with heresies and schisms, yet it is a most incredible thing; that in a time of such violent contention, and such scandalous divisions, none of the catholic bishops should once suggest this admirable expedient of infallibility. But what is most to our purpose to observe here, is, that we take the same method to confute these heresies, and to

preserves the unity of the faith, and the unity of the church, which the primitive fathers did, viz. by appealing to scripture, and the doctrine and practice of the primitive church. Whereas how short and easy a decision of all disputes might have been had, by referring them to the determination of the Roman church, and to her infallible authority; but not one word of that, except where they make their appeals to her after the express word of God; as it is in common with many other churches, especially those of apostolic foundation.*

Provincial and general councils have been a very good means of preventing schisms, yet they are not infallible remedies. The Council of Nice, though accorded by the authority of the emperor, did not make the Arians acquiesce in its determinations; which it certainly would have done, had it been the general belief of the christians in that age, that the decrees of General Councils were final and conclusive, to be believed by all men and to be examined by none. And after the Council of Nice, the fathers appealed to mens private reason, as is evident from the writings of Athanasius, Hilary, &c. in defence of the trinity. — “But the Council anathematized all those that did not receive their decrees.” But do not the protestant churches do this, without pretending to an absolute authority over mens faith? A fallible man, who is certainly assured that any doctrine is a damnable heresy, may declare it to be so; and if he have any such authority in the church, he may cast such men out of communion, and this is all that an anathema signifies; and all this may be done, without proving that a council has such infallible authority, as must silence all disputes — If then the primitive church had known any such infallible judge, they would certainly have appealed to him at one time or other; and it had been impossible, that errors or heresies should for any length of time together, have disturbed the church.†

It argues want of ingenuity, or great weakness of judgment in men, to exclaim against our church, on

* Tertul. adv. Marc. l. 2. c. 5. August. de unit. eccl. tom. 7. 581. 546.

† See dean Sherlock's excellent Discourse of a judge in controversies. Preserv. tit. iv.

amongst of the *heresies* and *separations* * from it. For the present divisions of the christian church, are no greater argument against us, than the ancient heresies were against the primitive church, or the protestant heresies (as they are pleased to call them,) are against the Roman church. For have not private persons, but whole provinces, whole nations deserted from the Roman church? and since there may be such multitudes of deserters where infallibility is challenged, what greater security can that give against them, more than our church does? What advantage then, has the church of Rome over any other profession of christians? Those who are of the same communion, are of the same mind; and notwithstanding all their pretences to unity, it is plain that they have more *divisions* among themselves, than they charge us with. For they have not only such as openly separate from them, but *violent dissensions* among themselves, and each party pleads the doctrine of the church, and decisions of its councils.† And yet the pope himself, either cannot or dare not determine which is in the right.—See an historical account of the divisions in the Roman church, down to the end of the seventeenth century, in bishop Stillingfleet's works, vol. 4. p. 133.

Two methods we do acknowledge they have to prevent *sects*, which we have not, *ignorance* and the *inquisition*; as for the latter, pope Paul IV. attributed the settling

* Introd. to Prot. Apol. passim.—“The fruits of the Reformation were an innumerable spawn of heresies and endless dissensions, &c.” Chalmers's Grounds of eath. doct. p. 24, 1796. This is intended to insinuate to the reader's mind, that there were no dissensions and heresies till the time of the reformation; and that they were utterly unknown in the primitive church. But Roman divines know well enough that the contrary is true, though in order to give the flocks a disgust to the reformation, they piously conceal it. See Hawarden's Charity and Truth, p. 37, 72, 310. Hickey's admirable apologet. vind. of the church of England in relation to schisms, Lond. 1706.

† For instance, in this very year, Dr. O'Connor asserts the opinions of Dr. Milner the pope's vicar, on the subject of the authority of popes and bishops and ancient discipline, &c. to be heretical and mahometan; and Dr. Milner arraigns the principles of Abbe Blanchard and the French clergy in England, as impious and schismatical. O'Connor's 2d. letter, liii. 59, 37. Milner's East, letter, 13.

of it in Spain, "to the inspiration of the Holy Ghost," and "that the authority of the Roman see depends only upon the office of the inquisition." These have been the kind, the primitive, the christian means of suppressing sects and heresies in the Roman church? It is very well known, that *we* do endeavour, to reclaim all dissenters; but God never wrought miracles to cure incorrigible persons, and would not have us to leave the way of our duty to suppress sects and heresies. The greatest severities have not effected it, which made one of the inquisitors in Italy complain, that after forty years experience, wherein they had destroyed above 100,000 persons for heresy, (as they call it,) it was so far from being suppressed, that it was extremely strengthened. What wonder is it then, that dissenters should yet continue among us, who do not use such barbarous ways of stopping the mouths of heretics with burning lead, or silencing them by a rope and flames? But wisely disowning the pretence of infallibility, we make use of the best arguments against sectaries from a just authority, and the sinfulness and folly of their refusing to submit to it.

As for the violent *differences* among Romish *divines* in matters of doctrine, it is answered "that these do not hinder the unity of the church, because they are only in matters of opinion, and which the church has not defined." To this I answer, 1. Why then were protestants accounted heretics in their reformation, if upon these principles, those things which they denied, were then no catholic doctrines. For if they were, when and where were they defined before the council of Trent? If then they were not defined, they could not by your church be accounted catholic doctrines; at the most, they could only be pious opinions, as that of the pope's infallibility is among you, and consequently men might be catholics still, though they disputed or denied them. 2. If this is an excuse for their intestine divisions, it ought to be admitted as an apology for ours, and therefore our clergy ought not to have been so freely censured by a late writer*, on account of their disputes about free will, predestination, &c. For our church (in her Articles) has used such moderation with respect to these points, as only to determine what is substantial and

* Introd. to prot. apol. p. 41, 55.

necessary, without deciding those niceties on which the Calvinistic and Arminian controversy turns, and therefore both parties may subscribe these articles. It is surely not unknown to this writer, what long and violent disputes have been carried on in his own church, and on these same points; between the Jansenists and Molinists.

It is insinuated by this writer, "that many of our clergy are secretly Socinians and infidels, who publicly subscribe and read the very creeds they disbelieve." To this scandalous assertion, I answer with Dr. Sherlock, that whether any Socinians do, I know not, no more than they know, when a secret Jew, or one who does not believe transubstantiation is received into holy orders by them; but I am sure an honest Socinian cannot subscribe our articles, unless he can subscribe the Nicene and Athanasian creeds.—But even supposing this to be true, yet what I have said in the case of an ignorant minister is applicable to this; the public prayers and administration of the sacraments, and catechism, dare not be corrupted by him, and this secures the purity of worship and sound instructions. And as for his sermons, if he preach his heresy openly, it is then incumbent on his parishioners to present him to the bishop, whose duty it is (as in the case of Mr. Stone,) to deprive him of his benefice. But in the church of Rome, a wicked or atheistical priest may insert blasphemy in the prayers, to which blasphemous worship the common people who are ignorant of Latin, must at all adventures say Amen, and give their assent! According to the council of Trent, "the same divine worship due to God himself, is to be given to the holy sacrament, and they are accursed who deny it." If transubstantiation then is *false*, or if the priest has not an *intention* to consecrate, or if he does not pronounce the *words* of consecration, which are uttered with so low a voice, that no one can hear them, in all these cases, bread remains bread still, and a wafer is worshipped instead of Christ! "If there be nothing but bread in the eucharist, says bishop Fisher, they are all idolaters." C. ~~Ciccolini~~ l. 1. c. 1. and says Coster, enchir. c. 8. "If transubstantiation be not true, the idolatry of heathens is more excusable, than of christians that worship a bit of bread!" And the bishop of Minorca makes it highly probable, that not one sacrament in an hundred is duly con-

secrated, and by consequence not one person in an hundred, but gives that worship to bread, which is due to God only. Hist. Co. Trent. l. 2. p. 241.

Now the Roman doctors freely confess that they themselves differ very much in opinion, yet are still of the same church: and yet these are the men, that reprobach the reformed churches because there are differing opinions among them, when there are the same disputes among themselves, managed with as great heat and contention. These are the men who tell us, that we must have an infallible judge to end our disputes, when infallible popes and councils dare not undertake to end theirs. For although they pretend that this is the most effectual way to silence all disputes, and make the whole christian world of one mind; yet it is apparent that the number of controversies has been rather increased than abated by it. If there have been some differences about the interpretation of scripture, have there not been others concerning the interpretation of councils? Did not many of those who were employed in drawing up the decrees of the council of Trent, afterwards differ in their judgment about them; each expounding them in favour of his own private opinion. And are not our articles as easy to be understood as the canons of the council of Trent? Have they not several expositions of that council, which are in many things directly opposite; for instance Soto's, Bellarmin's, and Bossuet's expositions. And why are not Bellarmin's books as authoritative a rule for the exposition of the catholic faith, as Bossuet's? Did not Bellarmin dedicate them to Sixtus V. and likewise had the pope's approbation "te annuente," as he himself says? What expectation then is there, that the decrees of the Trent council should be infallible, when one pope approves Bellarmin's, another Bossuet's exposition of the council, though in many things directly opposite to each other; and how shall we ever come to an infallible certainty what the council has determined?—Since then the decrees of the council are so very ambiguous, how shall the unlearned man know what their doctrine is? For instance, that council tells us, "that due honour is to be given to images." What this "due honour" is, how shall the plain man know? Whether it be a negative or positive honour? Whether he give too much or too little? Whether he divide right between the image and the prototype?

What kind of superstition is disallowed, for this the council does not define. And has not a protestant, who studies the scripture, and uses the best reason and judgment, he has to understand it, as much certainty and infallibility as this amounts to? And yet how few there are, that have time or learning to read the councils, which is a little more difficult than to read the scriptures in the vulgar tongue; and Pius IV. has commanded "that no one should presume to publish any commentaries, glosses, notes, or any sort of interpretation whatsoever upon the decrees of the council, but that the resolution of all doubts should be referred to his holiness" in Italy. Bulla sup. conf. concil.

By this it appears that the interpretation of general councils is as uncertain as the scriptures, and consequently as dangerous at least, and useless; which, probably, was the cause why the last council at Lateran, and this at Trent, forbade all persons under great curses, to explain and comment on their decrees, except by the pope's authority. So that the last resolution of the people's infallibility, is into the honesty and skill of their priests; for how infallible soever the council or pope may be, they know no more than what their priests tell them, which is such an infallibility as the meanest protestant has no reason to envy.—The church of England has offered all reasonable satisfaction to mankind, that it follows the true sense of scripture, 1. By not locking up the scripture from the view of the people, but leaving it free and open for all persons to judge concerning the doctrines here taught. Which argues a great assurance, that our church is not afraid of any opposition to be found to the word of God in the articles of our religion. And the contrary is greatly to be suspected, where reading the scripture is forbidden to the people as it is in the church of Rome, if the pope's authority signifies any thing; for Clement VIII. revoked the power of granting licenses, which was allowed by Pius IV.—The authentic books of our church, as the liturgy, articles, Form of ordination &c. are set forth in their native tongue by public authority. But upon occasion of Voisin's translation of the Missal into French, Pope Alexander VII. tragically complains, "that some seeds of perdition in France, had, to the ruin of their souls, and in contempt of the church's laws, arrived to that degree of madness, as to translate it into French," and be "for ever damned

and forbid it, and requires all persons to deliver up their books to be burnt." Yet it had been published by permission of cardinal De Retz, archbp. of Paris, and had the approbation of some doctors of the Sorbonne.*

2. By not pretending to deliver the sense of scripture on her own authority. If she required her members to depend wholly upon her sense, without examining themselves; that very thing would render her authority suspicious with all inquisitive men, who always mistrust where there is too much caution.

3. By her constantly appealing to the *primitive church*, ever since the reformation, as the best witness of her adhering to the true sense of scripture. And in truth, one of the greatest controversies between our church and the church of Rome, is not about the letter of scripture, but the *best interpreter* of it. Our church still contending, that the first and purest ages of the church, next to the apostles times, certainly best understood the sense and meaning of scripture; and the church of Rome pretending, that the giving the true sense of scripture, belongs to the present catholic church, which they would be thought to be, against the plainest evidence of scripture and reason,

I shall now proceed to show how much more CERTAINTY and SAFETY there is in the CHURCH of ENGLAND and IRELAND than in the church of Rome. This I shall do without even disputing the points in controversy. And I think this home to the purpose; it being the same argument wherewith the Roman priests endeavour to pervert our people.

I. First then I observe, that all the *positive* articles of our faith, are owned and believed in the church of Rome; we do not believe all that they believe, but they believe all that we do; for our faith is contained in the ancient creeds, the *Apostle's*, the *Nicene*, and the *Athanasian*, which the church of Rome owns as well as we. And though we do not build our *certainty* on the authority of the church of Rome, but on the express revelation of scripture, which contains all the articles of our faith, and is as much certainty as we desire; yet methinks, even a modest Romanist should blush to charge our faith

* Bp. Stillingfleet's "No tradition for forbidding scripture," vol. 6.

with uncertainty, when as far as it reaches, it is the same with theirs. Now when we believe the same things which the church of Rome does, upon the authority of Christ and his apostles, whose doctrine is contained in the New Testament, and expounded by the general faith of the christian church in all ages, what appearance of *uncertainty* can be charged on such a faith? We reject, indeed the infallible authority of the present church of Rome, but what then? Will not a true orthodox faith save us, unless we believe in Christ upon the authority of a particular church, which had no being when christianity was first planted in the world?

That these *creeds*, in the opinion of the primitive fathers, contained all things necessary, is evident from the third general council of Ephesus, which declares "that it should not be lawful to utter or compose any other faith, than that which was defined by the Nicene council; and that if any dared to offer any other creed, to any persons willing to be converted from paganism, judaism, or heresy, he should be anathematized." And if we pass into the Abyssinian, or Greek, or Eastern churches, we shall find no other than that of the apostles explained by the Nicene or Athanasian; and although they may agree with the Romans in several points, or hold some peculiar tenets, yet they have *no other* Confession of Faith, than we ourselves hold.

But in opposition to the primitive doctrine, the Romish council of Trent formed another confession of faith, consisting of *twelve new articles* added to the Nicene creed. This *new creed* is not only imposed on the clergy, but all converts are required to profess the same, before their admission to communion with them;* and this they *swear* to be "the true catholic faith without which no man can be saved, which they will hold most constantly, and confess inviolable (by God's help) to their last breath," &c. This new profession, says bishop Patrick, is most impudently pretended to be the true catholic faith, being in no sense catholic, neither as to time, nor place. For it was no where used till they made it, nor is now every where believed; and was not at all believed in any church

* Eadem professione uti tenentur, quicunque ab hæresi re-meantes ad fidem ecclesiæ catholicæ reuertuntur. Catech. ad paroch. 518. This new addition to the creed, as Mr. Spinckes observes, is an invincible bar to an accommodation.

for above fifteen hundred years; nor now used in that church itself, when they admit members into the catholic church by baptism; but they are put into a state of salvation by believing the old Nicene creed alone; which is a direct contradiction to their new creed, which they make *necessary to salvation*.

There are several pretences made use of, to justify these additions to the creed; 1. "That they are contained implicitly in the old."—Now there are several things contained in the old creed, which may be deduced from it by evident consequences, as the deity of Christ, his two natures, &c. The addition of these by the Nicene fathers, was properly no addition, but an *explication*.* But, says bishop Bramhall, it is as possible to draw water out of a pumice, as to extract from the old creeds, the worship of images, transubstantiation, purgatory, &c. for these are real additions, and not explications of the old creed.—2. "That the old creeds make no mention of the bible, sacraments," &c. But it can never be maintained that there are any other necessary articles of faith, purely such, which are not contained in the old creeds. *Petenda* there are, and *agenda*, matters of prayer and practice, which in a large sense, are to be believed, because they are revealed. But what we call the *credenda*, or articles of faith are revealed, because they are to be believed. These are of a *speculative* nature, and of these, the creeds are a sufficient summary. Among the *agenda* are the sacraments, and therefore are not matters purely of faith. 3. It is pretended, "that our thirty-nine articles are a new creed." Now we must distinguish here, between *necessary articles* of faith, and the *necessary conditions* of *ecclesiastical communion*. Of the *former*, our church holds the creeds to be a sufficient summary. But as for the *latter*, we assert that any national church reforming itself, may declare its sense of those abuses in articles of religion, and require of men a subscription to them; but not to the end that all those articles should be believed as *articles of faith*. But the church of Rome not only requires the *belief* of her errors, but makes the belief of them *necessary to salvation*. The church of England in her canons, excommunicates those only who *affirm* her articles are erroneous. And what a wide difference is there between not saying they are *erroneous*, and

* See Dr. Hickes's letters, vol. 1. 191. and 2. 46.

saying that they are *necessary*; ten thousand propositions may be true, which are no necessary points of faith.

This then is the difference between us. We are catholics, they are Romans. We believe the catholic faith of all christians; they (as distinguished from us,) believe the Roman faith, which none believe but themselves. We believe that which has been *ever believed*; they believe that which was never believed till yesterday, in comparison with the ancient faith. Ours is the belief of the whole body of christians, theirs the belief of a sect.

II. As for those *doctrines* and *practices* which we *reject*, because we have no evidence for them, but only the authority of the church of Rome, which is no evidence to us, because it is not evident itself, we think ourselves much safer in rejecting, than we could be in owning them; and that, for this plain reason, that though we should be mistaken in rejecting such doctrines, (as we are very certain we are not,) they are such mistakes, as do no injury to common christianity, no dishonour to our common Saviour; and therefore cannot be dangerous to our souls; whereas if the doctrines and practices of the church of Rome, be, as we say they are, innovations, and corruptions of christianity, they are *very dangerous* and *fatal corruptions*. As to show this in some few instances:

What injury is it to christianity, not to believe the *infallibility* of the bishop of Rome or Council, while we believe Christ and his apostles to be infallible, which is quite sufficient to direct the church? For while we adhere to what they taught, we can neither believe too little nor too much; but if we believe the infallibility of the pope, we are bound to stand to his authority, and to receive all his dictates without examination; and how dangerous is this, if he should prove not to be infallible? For then he may lead us into damnable errors, and we have no way to get out of them.—According to the Trent creed, we must “swear an (*indefinite*) obedience to the pope as the vicar of Christ;” and “firmly embrace the traditions of the church—*pari pietatis affectu*, with the same respect as the holy scriptures.” And must receive the scripture itself only “in the sense in which holy mother church (i. e. the Romish church) hath held and still holds it.” Grounds of cath. doct. Dublin, 1796.

If we give a SUPREMACY to the BISHOP OF ROME, and he has no right to it by Christ's institution; this is an invasion on the rights of all the bishops in the world, and makes it impossible for them to govern or reform their own churches, whatever occasion there be, without his leave; which very thing reduced the church to such a condition formerly, that the cardinals appointed by Paul III. to consult concerning the state of the church, assured him, that "she was just falling headlong into ruin," and the cause was, that "the pope's will had been the rule of all his actions," Richer. l. 4. It also hindered the reformation of the church of Rome itself, when it was so earnestly desired both by christian princes and churches of that communion; witness the management of affairs in the council of Trent.—For a true account of the opinion of Grotius, Melancthon, and Thorndike on this head, consult Ridley's review of Philips's life of Pole, p. 265. Spinckes's answer to the Essay for catholic communion, p. 73. Bramhall's works, p. 258.

Suppose we should be mistaken about the lawfulness of PRAYING TO SAINTS, the church of Rome does not pretend; that it is *necessary* to practise it, and therefore we want nothing necessary to salvation by not doing it; and certainly our Saviour cannot think it any injury to his mediation, that we so wholly rely upon his intercession, that we desire no other advocates, and that we are so jealous of his glory, that we will not admit the most glorious saints to the least partnership with him.—Bishop Montague himself declares it to be *foolish and idle*; see his Treatise, p. 64, 65, and Spinckes's answer, p. 125. Mr. Thorndike in a paper sent to a lady before his death, says, that "to pray to saints for those things which only God can give, (as all papists do,) is by the proper sense of their words downright idolatry. If they say their meaning is, by a figure only to desire them to procure their requests of God; how dare any christian trust his soul with that church, which teaches that which must needs be idolatry in all that understand not the figure?" Several Conf. betw. a Romish priest, &c. Lond. 1679.

Suppose it were lawful to worship God or Christ by IMAGES, which we think expressly forbidden by the second commandment, yet the Romanists do not consider it an affront or injury to worship God without images; and a

late author grants*, that "a whole nation may be orthodox catholics, with hardly any images among them."—He who considers what God's jealousy means, must think it dangerous to worship (*ut colantur*) images of God, and Christ, and the saints, for fear they should be forbid by the second commandment, which all the wit of man can never prove that they are not.

As for PRAYERS in an UNKNOWN TONGUE, it is acknowledged by Abbe Fleury, "that in the first ages, they used that language in the public prayers, which every country was most accustomed to, and that the Armenians to this day, perform divine service in their own tongue.†" We greatly fear that to pray without understanding, would not be accepted by that God, who is the father of spirits, and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

If we believe that CHRIST, once offering himself upon the cross was a SUFFICIENT SACRIFICE, PROPITIATION, and SATISFACTION for the sins of the whole world, what injury do we to the sacrifice of Christ, though we do not believe, that he is offered again every day in ten thousand masses? If we believe that in the supper of our Lord, we eat the sacramental body and blood of Christ, which by his own institution, do as effectually convey to us all the benefits of his death and passion, as if we could eat his natural flesh and drink his blood, what injury does the church suffer by denying TRANSUBSTANTIATION? And if when we approach his holy table, we worship Christ in heaven, is not this as true an honour to our Saviour, as to worship him under the species of bread? But if transubstantiation be false, what a hazard does that man run, who worships a piece of bread, which the most learned Romanists themselves grant to be *idolatry*.—Some quotations from Land, Forbes, &c. have been lately alleged, as if giving countenance to this absurd doctrine, but these only acknowledge a *real presence*, without attempting to define the manner of it. I know not of what use this acknowledgement can be to the Romanists, who not only take upon them to explain and declare the manner of Christ's presence there, (*viz.* that in the sacrament is really, truly, and

* Introd. to prot. apol. p. 35.

† Discourses on eccl. history, p. 97, 202.

substantially contained the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of Christ; and there is made a *conversion* of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood; which conversion the catholic (popish) church calls transubstantiation,) but make it an *article of faith* that this explanation is true. Of this absurd doctrine the Roman divines are growing weary, and pretend that our only difference is concerning the *real presence*. But we all say that Christ is truly present in the sacrament: the question is as to the mode? See Dr. Milner's sermon at St. Chad's, Le Mesurier's answer to do. p. 43, 1810. Manning's short way, p. 10. Fletcher's answer, &c.

A late writer * pretends to prove, that we of the church of Ireland worship bread and wine, because "we kneel to the elements."—Now we do not kneel to the sacrament, but only receive it kneeling; and if this man cannot distinguish between an act of worship to the sacrament (which our church esteems gross idolatry), and a devout posture of receiving it, yet the meanest son of our church can. Why does he not as well say, that when we kneel at prayers, we worship the common prayer book which lies before us, and out of which we read, as that we worship the bread, when we receive and eat it devoutly on our knees.

As for HALF COMMUNION, it is confessed by F. Simon† "that it is well known to the world, that the Orientals communicate in both kinds, which they ground on the words of Christ; that they all observe this custom; and the school divines agree, that communion in both kinds was religiously observed in the Latin church, until these latter ages, when it was thought fit to change it." We consider, (says Mr. Payne, in answer to the bp. of Meaux) the Roman half communion as both contrary to the institution and command of Christ, and to the practice of the primitive church grounded on that command; and is no less than a sacrilegious dividing and mangling of the most sacred mystery of christianity, and destroying the very nature of the sacrament, which is to represent the death of Christ and his blood separated from his body; and *this alone*, says bishop Bramhall, is a just cause of secession from the Roman church.—But

* Introd. to prot. apol. p. 87.

† Belief of the Eastern nations, p. 13.

it is pretended "that if both kinds were received, the expenditure on the wine would beggar the nation." This pretence is as old as the time of Bramhall (one hundred and sixty years ago,) who answers it thus: Surely wine is not so scarce, but that they might taste so much tempered with water, as they use it, as might serve for the sacrament, where the least particle conveys Christ to the receiver, as well as the whole chalice full. Neither is there any christian country in the world, where they might not have wine enough for this use if they please.

Though we deny such a place as purgatory, is not the fear of hell as good an argument to bring men to repentance? Or does it lessen the mercies of God, or the hope of sinners to say, that God remits all future punishments when he remits the sin? But if the hope of expiating their sins in purgatory, and of being prayed out of it, should embolden any man in sin, what a disappointment would it be to find their purgatory hell?

This is sufficient to show, that we can suffer nothing by denying such doctrines as these, unless the causeless anathemas of the church of Rome can damp us; but the hazard is so vastly great on their side, the mistake will prove so fatal, if they be in a mistake, that nothing less than an infallible certainty can justify the prudence of such a choice, and therefore it is not fit for such fallible creatures as we own ourselves to be, to venture on them. We are safe as we are, and we think it best to keep ourselves so, though we had no other reason than it is good to be safe.

Thirdly, I say we are safe in rejecting these doctrines, unless they can prove, that by rejecting them, we want something necessary to salvation. There are two things especially, wherein the Romanists think they have the advantage of us, viz. that they eat the natural flesh of Christ in the sacrament, and receive a judicial pardon of all their sins by the absolution of the priest; which we confess we do not. Now suppose it were necessary to salvation to eat the natural flesh of Christ, and that Christ would not forgive any man, who was not before forgiven by the priest, yet if these be the institutions of Christ, we have them as well as they.

If the words of consecration, This is my body, do by the institution of Christ, transubstantiate the bread into the natural flesh of Christ, these words must have

the same effect, when pronounced by a priest of our church, as of the church of Rome. And therefore if this were the intention of Christ, to give us his natural flesh to eat, we eat it as much as they; for we eat the consecrated elements, which are whatever Christ intended to make them by the words of consecration. For our not believing transubstantiation cannot hinder the virtue of consecration, if Christ has so appointed it; for the institutions of our Saviour do not change their nature with mens opinions of them.—Thus, penitents in our church may confess their sins to a priest, if they please, and receive absolution; and if by the institution of Christ, this is a judicial absolution, then they have it too; for our church does not disallow of confession in particular cases, but the necessity of it, in order to forgiveness in all cases.

There are but two objections I know of, that can be made against this; either that we have not true priests and bishops in our church, and therefore no consecration of the elements; or that the intention of the priest is necessary to consecration, and nothing more is done than what the priest intends to do; and therefore no priest can transubstantiate, but he who intends to do so. 1. As for the first of these; if there be no true priests and bishops in our church, there are none in the church of Rome; for our bishops and priests derive their succession from those bishops, who received orders in the church of Rome, and therefore have as good orders as they could give, and as they themselves had; and if we have as true bishops and priests as the church of Rome, we must have as perfect sacraments as they also.* 2. As for the intention of the priest; now this, in the church of Rome, signifies no more, than to intend to do what the church does; and why is not intending to do what Christ does, as good and perfect an intention as this? And thus we all intend to do what Christ did; which is all the intention that can be necessary to consecration, unless the private opinion of the priest can alter the nature of the institution. But the truth is, if the church of Rome de-

* See Brevier's answer to Manning on the mission of the reformed churches, Dublin, 1728, and bp. Burnet's vind. of the ordinations of the church of England. Pres: tit. 1. 251.—On the subject of the Nagahead ordination, see the answers to Ward, by Earberry in 1723. Williams, 1721, and by Dr. Eltrington in 1808. Dr. Brett's div. right of episcopacy, 1718.

pende on the intention of the priest for consecration, no papist can ever be sure that the bread is consecrated, and then certainly it is not transubstantiated; and therefore, I think, they may compound this business, and allow transubstantiation to us, if we allow it to them. We want it not indeed, and care not for it; but those who lay so much stress on it, need not forsake our church for that reason; at least have no reason to say that we want any thing necessary to salvation.

Were these things well considered, I am persuaded that no man would forsake the certainty and safety of the church of England and Ireland, and endanger his soul in the communion of the church of Rome.—Far be it, says the learned Sir Humphry Lynde (*Via tuta*, p. 51.) from the thoughts of good men, to think the points in controversy between them and us, to be of an indifferent nature, as that a man may resolve this way or that way, without peril of salvation. The bleeding wounds and sufferings of holy men and blessed martyrs in our church, sufficiently witness the great danger they apprehended in the Romish religion, and the important difference there is between us.*

To conclude with the Romish Dr. Hawarden. "It is the common duty of all mankind to examine seriously the grounds of their religion, to see that they have made

* The author of the *Prot. Apol.* p. 49, asserts that "protestants have repeatedly and candidly acknowledged not only a possibility, but a *certainty of salvation* in the Romish communion, and that their testimonies alone would fill a volume." If this author means protestants of the church of England, his assertion is most notoriously false. We grant the church of Rome to be a *true* or *real* church, yet we affirm that she is both *heretical*, *schismatical*, and *idolatrour*, and we say with bishop Stillingfleet, that all those who are in the communion of the church of Rome, do run so great a hazard of their salvation, that none who have a care of their souls, ought to embrace it, or continue in it. (*Works* v. 1.) Bingham's works, 2, 804. Barrow's do. 1, 783. So that though we cannot join with them, without manifest prejudice to our christianity, yet it is most easy for them to come to us. They held actual communion with us, and came to our churches for twelve years in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign until the bishop of Rome sent a prohibition. And he offered to Queen Elizabeth to confirm our *English liturgy*, communion in both kinds, &c. provided she would acknowledge his supremacy. *Camd. Eliz.* an. 1570. So that our worship is orthodox, even in the opinion of our adversaries.

the best use of their reason ; that they believe nothing rashly ; that temporal interest, honor, convenience, friends, passion, prejudice, education or neglect, have no sway either in choosing or in adhering to what they profess.—He must certainly be in a desperate state, who is not serious in searching out the compass of his duty ; who shuts his eyes against the light ; who either will not take the necessary pains to know the will of his divine master ; or refuses to comply with it, when it is known.” Church of Christ, p. 47. and Pref. *

* In the foregoing defence of our church, we must recollect that its reformation is defended; only as far as relates to the resumption of its ancient episcopal rights as a free national church ; as for the *manner of proceeding* in our reformation, this has been ably vindicated among others by bishops Burnet, Smalridge, Drs. Saywell and Claget, in answer to Walker, &c. in 1687.

CON.

CONCLUSION.

POPERY, as archbishop Wake long since observed, in its proper colours is so unlike catholic christianity, that it is in vain ever to hope to promote it, if it appears in its own shape. It is necessary, therefore, that the religion like the prophet, should come *in sheeps clothing*, and the heresy be made to look as orthodox as possible. Some things are *denied*, others *mollified*, all *disguised*, and a double benefit thereby obtained; popery is to be received as a very innocent harmless thing; and the protestants, especially the ministers and first reformers represented to the world, as a sort of people that have supported themselves by calumny and lies, and made a noise about errors and corruptions, which are no where to be found, but in their own brains or books, but which the church of Rome detests as well as we.—

None pursued this method of *disguising* the Romish doctrines and practices, with such dexterity and art, as Bossuet in his Exposition of the catholic faith. But the perfidious sophistry of this author was satisfactorily unmasked by Abp. (then Mr.) Wake, in his Exposition

of the doctrine of the church of England, and his two Defences of that Exposition, 1687. It was attempted also by the author of the Papist misrepresented and represented, and in a book entitled an Agreement between the church of England and Rome. The former of these was answered by Drs. Stillingfleet and Claget, in 1687; and the latter by Drs. Sherlock and Mr. Williams, in 1688. Methinks, says Dr. Sherlock, it argues some distrust of their cause, that they dare not downright defend it, but are forced either to *represent* it away almost into protestant heresy, or to shelter themselves in their *agreement* with a protestant church; but the best way is, to turn protestants themselves, and then we will own our agreement with them.

Being overturned in their attempts to recommend their doctrines by means of books written professedly by Romanists, they endeavoured next to promote them under the *disguise* of ministers of the church of England, and accordingly they published in 1703, An Essay for Catholic communion, by a Minister of the church of England. This attempt to disguise popery under a protestant name and dress, says the Rev. Nath. Spinckes, the learned confuter of it, is such an instance of *treachery* and *insincerity*, as would put any impartial observer out of hope, that any good can come from so unfair an adversary. Had he pulled off his mask, every body must have owned him as a generous adversary. But this would not answer his design, which was under the notion of a friend to get into our bosoms, and to find an opportunity of instilling his poison, before he was suspected.—Besides this answer of Mr. Spinckes, there was another by Rev. Sam. Grascome, entitled Concordia Discors. Mr. Spinckes's answer is well worthy of being reprinted.

The very same method the emissaries of Rome are pursuing at this day; Bossuet's Exposition and the Papist Misrepresented, have been lately reprinted in London, and in this country we have been favoured with a Protestant Apology for (what is called) the Catholic Church, 1809, in which popery is pretended to be proved from the testimonies of protestants. But this is an old trick, attempted above two hundred years ago, by Brerely, and whose book likewise entitled a Protestant Apology, &c. (from whence many of this author's testimonies are extracted,) was completely confuted by bishop Morton, in

his Catholic Appeal, 1610. To this author's protestant testimonies, I briefly reply with bishop Bramhall, that whatever were the opinions or private errors of Calvin, Luther, or the Magdeburgenses, or other *foreigners* (whom he quotes in abundance) he ought not have charged them upon the church of England, for they were mere strangers to our affairs, and many of them died before controversies were rightly stated, or truly understood, and for none of whom *our church* is obliged to be responsible. As for his quotations from *our English writers*, I answer, that in general, he mangles and misapplies them contrary to the true sense of the author, as I have proved in several instances, and quotes them in such a manner, that upon enquiry they appear to be directly and positively against him: as has been clearly shown by Mr. Spilckes in his answer to the Essay for cath. communion, and bishop Morton.—But I cannot see why the authority of some *very few persons*, should bear sway against the constant opinion of our church ever since the reformation. Thus, as for our charge of *idolatry* against the church of Rome, if Mr. Thorndike held something singular on this subject (but which he changed before his death), is his opinion to be esteemed the judgment of the church, contrary to the constant opinion of all our most learned bishops and divines (even Montague, Heylin, and Laud,) ever since the reformation?

To this pretended Apology, there is prefixed an Introduction, in which the author finding it impracticable to vindicate the Romish doctrines and practices upon *true catholic* principles, palliates every thing that appears shocking, denies others, pleads for others that they are not obligatory, and represents all in general as nearly approaching to the principles of our church.

But we must observe that this author's exposition of the doctrines of the Romish church, is very different from what they are represented in their Councils, creeds, and in the generality of their learned writers, and from what their church does really profess and their people continually practise, especially in Italy, or any other popish countries. But protestants are not to be told all at once; there are several mysterious and important things, which are not fit to be communicated to those whom they are endeavouring to bring over to the Romish church.

These things must be reserved, till their proselytes are got into safe custody; and afterwards when they have given away all liberty of judging for themselves, and "must receive the interpretation of scripture in the sense in which holy mother church hath held and still holds it." (Pius's creed art. 14.) then they may be entrusted with the discovery of even the greatest absurdities; for they have gone too far to recede; and if they discover any hesitation, or give suspicion of their being shocked at such discoveries, their superiority is immediately questioned, and where their church has power in her hands, they must expect some motherly correction for their pains; and it is well if they escape being burnt for heretics.

It might have been justly expected, that this writer, (treating professedly of a reconciliation between the churches of England and Rome,) should have presented us with clear and evident proofs from scripture and antiquity, of the lawfulness and necessity of half communion, purgatory, bishop of Rome's supremacy, transubstantiation, prayers in an unknown tongue, sacrifice of the mass, &c. and whether the apostles would have rejected our communion for those reasons, for which the church of Rome now rejects it. But instead of entering thus into particular points of controversy, and proving the faith, worship, and discipline of the church of Rome to be agreeable to scripture and antiquity, (wherein they shall be sooner foiled,) our adversaries, it has been often remarked, choose rather to dispute and wrangle about more general and intricate matters, and run into the general controversies of infallibility, church authority, confusion of adversaries, judges of controversies*, &c. by which means they can lead men, if not into *scapulars*, yet into a maze and labyrinth, from whence they shall not easily extricate themselves. Their usual method, is to wave all particular disputes, and to attempt to prove that some church must be infallible, and that this is the church of Rome. This they pretend, to be the shortest way to end controversies.

* For instance, Manning's short way to end disputes, De la Hogue de Ecclesia, Mumford's Question of questions, Holden's Guide, Chalcnor's Old religion, Hawarden's Charity and Truth, &c.

Now not to show *at present* ~~their~~ *uniqueness* the which of Rome challenges to herself the title, privileges, &c. of the catholic church; nor to ~~examine~~ *examine* the texts, on which this pretence of infallibility is founded; (See p. 147, 156.) I only say, that when such errors and corruptions are notoriously evident, though but in any *one* instance, to argue that the church has not erred, because she cannot err, is to dispute against matters of fact, like the philosopher disputing against the possibility of motion; and no argument whatever, is good against matter of fact. True, it will be replied, if it were notoriously evident that the church has erred, there was an end of her infallibility; but, this is matter of dispute, whether she has erred or not, and then if you can prove that she cannot err, you effectually prove that she has not erred. By no means; for, if she is charged with errors, and plain evidence brought, that she has actually erred, ~~un-~~ *less* you can as plainly take off this evidence, it weakens and overthrows all the proofs for infallibility. And therefore when they *begin* with the proof of infallibility, they begin at the *wrong end*; for when the church is charged with error, if they would not lose their labour, they must prove that she has *not* erred, before they prove her to be infallible; for otherwise after all the pains they have taken to prove her infallibility, if they cannot deliver her from the charge of having erred, their labour is lost, and therefore it is best to try that first.

Accordingly, to the objection, "that our Saviour would not permit the church of Rome to give the laity the communion in one kind, if it were unlawful to do so," Bishop Stillingfleet justly answers, that the argument is stronger the other way; the church of Rome forbids the doing of that which Christ enjoined; therefore it cannot be infallible, since the command of Christ is as much plainer than the promise of infallibility to the church of Rome.—Whatever Christ promises, he will certainly perform; and therefore if the church of Rome *has* erred, ~~he~~ *she* never promised she should be infallible. And therefore if it appear, that the church of Rome has erred, our interpretation of those texts which are alleged to prove infallibility, are to be preferred before the ~~papal~~ *papal* interpretation of them, especially when the evidence we have, that the church has erred, is much more plain and no-

asserts, that the Christ has promised that she shall not err.

And thus their *short way* to end disputes and confute heresies, is mere sophistry and imposture; and if men would be sincere and honest, they must not flatter themselves with an opinion of the church's infallibility, but must examine the particular disputes between us, and be thoroughly satisfied that the church of Rome has *not* erred, before they continue in her communion; for, even according to Mr. Manning (*Short Way*, pref.), "it is a vain attempt to prove the church of Rome infallible, as long as this popular prejudice (*i. e.* the charge of many gross errors) subsists against her." So that according to Mr. Manning and Bellarmine's 6th. note, if the Romanists are desirous of a reconciliation between the church of England and Rome, they must lay aside their noisy pretensions to infallibility, and prove their *doctrines* and *practices* to be agreeable to *scripture* and *antiquity*. I must again call upon you, says the learned Dr. Hickey, to tell me, where the Roman church, *i. e.* the religion of the present Roman church was, for five hundred years after the first preaching of Christ? Show me *antiquity*, *universality* and *succession* through those centuries for your Trent doctrines. If you do not answer this challenge, you must give us leave so think, that your silence proceeds from the sense you have, that those ages afford no evidence for the popish part of your religion, but only for that ancient and sound part which we have retained. Your interest likewise obliges you to do it, because if you can, you will put an end forever to the controversy, and not only convert us, but the whole protestant world.

Had the church of Rome been able to defend her innovations by reason or antiquity, she had never thought of infallibility; for the origin and progress of her innovations have been so often and so clearly made out, and their church's errors so irrefragably exposed amongst others, by Bishop Stillingfleet, as to these six points, the *authority of tradition*, the *canon of scripture*, the *use of scriptures in the vulgar tongue*, the *merit of good works*, the *number of sacraments*, and *auricular confession*; as to *saints worship* and *excommunicating* against Condom, by Dr. Claget; as to the *affluence of the clergy* against Walker, by Mr. Tully and Mr. Wharton; as to the *Latin service*, *image worship*, *half communion*, and *traditions* against Mumford's

Question of Questions, by Dr. Walch; as to *images* by Mr. Pelling, against *Nubes testium*; as to *transubstantiation* and *purgatory*, by Drs. Claget and Wake; to name no more at present, that they have no way of vindicating themselves, but by pretending to condemn their opposers, whom they see they cannot answer.—And indeed if *true antiquity* had been on their side, what need had they of *spurious* and *counterfeit* authors, to make some appearance of antiquity with? And this is reason enough to suspect their pretences to antiquity; for no man takes sanctuary in falsehood, who has truth on his side. Another evidence of this is, their *corrupting* ancient authors, and their *index expurgatorius*, which corrects the primitive fathers, and orders the leaving out of such passages as oppose their errors. But I shall only add the memorable account which Bonhornius, Divinity professor at Louvain, gives of himself, viz. “That he having been employed by the Inquisitors to strike out at least six hundred places of the ancients, which seemed to make against the Romish doctrines, was so troubled in mind about it, that it was an occasion of his turning protestant, and made him resolve to quit that religion which could not defend itself without such manifest impostures.” *De eucharistia*. l. 3.*

“To confess the truth ingenuously, (says Cornelius Mus, bishop of Bitonto, promoted by Paul III. to a bishopric); I would give more credit to one pope, in those things which concern the mysteries of faith, than to a thousand Jeroms, Austins, Gregories.” In 14 Ep. ad Rom. See Comber’s Roman forgeries, 1673. Laurentius’s Reverentia Ecclesie Romanæ erga sanctos patres. Indeed as I mentioned before, the greatest controversy between our church and the church of Rome, is not about the bare letter but the interpreter of scripture. Our church contends that the first and purest ages of the church, next to the apostles times, did certainly best understand the sense and meaning of scripture; and the church of Rome, asserts that it belongs to the present catholic (Roman) church, to give the true sense of scripture. Accordingly they add to, and alter the primitive fathers, in order to bring them to a conformity with the present Roman church. Sixtus Senensis highly commends Pius V. for his care in extinguishing all dangerous books, and “purging the writings of all catholic authors, especially of the ancient fathers (ac præcipue veterum patrum scripta) from the filth and poison of heresy.” And when the learned Jesuit Schottus published six hundred epistles of Isidorus, out of the Vatican library, never before printed; Beyerlinck the censor of books allowed them to be printed, “because they contained nothing contrary to the catholic Roman

"On the contrary, the church of England orders that none of her preachers, shall teach the people any thing to be held and believed; but what is consentaneous to the doctrine of the old and new testament; and what the catholic fathers and ancient bishops have gathered out of that very doctrine." Our arms are stretched out, to use the words of bishop Sage, to embrace as our christian brethren, and we are ready to communicate with all those, who are willing to profess the FAITH, and join in the WORSHIP; and submit to the GOVERNMENT, which obtained in the catholic church during the first four centuries: with all such we are forward to unite, we are earnest to

religion." In Approb. edit. 1688. It seems they had not passed but upon this condition:

This way of interpreting scripture and deciding controversies, is absolutely destructive of all permanency of doctrine, and settlement in religious opinions. Mr. Nowlan on occasion of his late *re-lapse* into popish heresy and schism, informs us, that he "embraces *both and every article proposed for his belief by the our holy catholic, and apostolic church of Christ!*" i. e. he does not pretend to be capable of judging either of scripture, or tradition; but trusts the judgment of the *present Roman church*, what is the true sense of scripture and antiquity, and receives *whatever* she proposes as an article of faith.

In order to support the authority of the *present Roman church*, its priests have recourse to *miracles*. One of these supposed miracles has been detailed with great pomp by Dr. Milner under the title of Authentic Documents relating to the miraculous cure of Winifred White, at St. Winifred's well, on 28th of June, 1805. One example of it in former times, I have met with and cannot help extracting from a recitation sermon by A. Egan, late a Franciscan friar, and confessor general of Ireland, Lond. 1673. "I may tell you, says Mr. Egan, what offence I took at these vain stories which they have of miracles, and especially when I discovered their grand impostures therein. For, about seven years ago, a priest, near the city of Limerick, by name William Sarchwell, had, for fifty shillings, hired a woman to pretend herself a cripple from her birth, and that she had a revelation, that if she dipped herself in a certain well, whilst the priest said mass, she should be recovered of her infirmity. The plot thus laid, she comes halting to the well, and returns out of it perfectly cured, (exactly as W. White did) which became a miracle to the people, and did not only get to she cheat a vast sum of money, but also confirmed the people in their superstition. But after some time, the counterfeit had some remorse of conscience, and came to me to confession in order to absolution, which I would not grant till she had declared the whole story to the congregation, which she did accordingly."

give them the right hand of fellowship, and hold communion with them. It is neither number, nor outward splendour, nor prevalence, nor worldly prosperity; it is nothing but conformity to Christ's institutions, and catholic principles founded thereon, that can constitute a lawful communion. And what is yet our greater comfort, our communion is such as, we have no manner of reason to doubt, would have been readily owned for a true, lawful, orthodox, christian communion by the catholic church in the days of the first council of Nice, and upwards to the days of the apostles. Letters, p. 131.

If then, the Romanists are desirous of an union with the churches of England and Ireland, they must not only lay aside their absurd pretensions to infallibility, but condescend to treat with us, as with equals, and not as with inferiors. When a reconciliation was attempted to be effected between the churches of England and France in the year 1719, several letters passed between the doctors of the Sorbonne, and doctor Wake, archbishop of Canterbury. Dr. Wake thus expresses himself in a letter to Mr. Beauvoir, "If Dr. Dupin thinks we are to take *their* direction what to retain, and what to give up, he is utterly mistaken. I am a friend to peace, but more to truth. And they may depend upon it, I shall always account our church to stand upon an *equal* fact with theirs; and that we are no more to receive laws from them, than we desire to impose any upon them. In short, the church of England is free and orthodox; she has a *plenary* authority within herself, and has no need to recur to any other church to direct her what to retain, or what to do. Nor will we otherwise than in a *brotherly* way, and in a *full equality* of *right* and *power*, even consent to have any treaty with France. And therefore if they mean to deal with us, they must lay down this for the *foundation*, that we are to deal with one another upon equal terms." Dr. Dupin consented to this scheme so far as to acknowledge, that "an union between the French and English bishops may be completed, or at least advanced without consulting the Roman pontiff, and that without his consent, the union would be valid." This noble opportunity of shaking off the papal yoke, and reforming the Gallican church, was unhappily lost, on account of its not being supported by the civil power. Mosheim Ecc. hist. vol. 6.

Indeed it has been acknowledged by many eminent Romanists, that as the reformation of the Roman church, was hindered at the council of Trent, by the arts of the bishop of Rome, so an union among all christian churches can never be effected until his authority over the Roman church be entirely abolished. "This was the issue and aim of the Trent reformation, says Richer, that no respect should be had to truth, but to show and outward pomp only; and that all things should be referred to the splendour and profit of the Roman court.—"All christian nations for more than two hundred years, parted after a Reformation; and at length, instead of one that was true and general, they had one that was counterfeit and imaginary;" and the select council of Cardinals and Prelates, deputed by Paul III. to acquaint him with the state of the church, presented to him upon oath, "that the original of the evils the church groaned under was, that some popes (his predecessors) had heaped up to themselves teachers after their own lusts; not such from whom they might learn what they ought to do, but such by whose art and cunning they might find out a way to make what they chose lawful; so that the will of the pope, whatsoever it was, was the rule of his actions.—From this fountain, as from the Trojan horse, so many abuses and grievous diseases have broken into the church of God, by which it is reduced to a desperate condition."

And as a reformation of the Romish church was prevented at that time, it appears almost impossible, says bishop Stratford, that it ever will take place again, for there is a two-fold bond, by which the pope's bishops are more especially enslaved to his pleasure; the one an *oath*, the other of *interest*, for 1. Every popish bishop at his consecration takes an oath, (totally unknown in the primitive ages), "to be faithful to St. Peter, and to the holy Roman church, and his Lord the pope, and his successors; to help them to defend and to keep the papacy, and the *royalties* of St. Peter—and to be *obedient* as well as faithful, not only to preserve and defend the rights, honours, privileges, and authorities of the pope, but to encrease and advance them, yea to the utmost of their power, and to cause the pope's commands

* Hist. gen. cont. p. 544. 281. See bp. Stratford on the Trent council. Pres. Tit. 1. Vergerii, tom. 1. 95.

to be observed by others, as well as to observe them themselves," &c. 2. For those whose consciences are so debauched, that they despise an oath, the pope has secured them by worldly interest. The cardinals are all creatures purely of his own making, and no one can be a bishop or abbot, without at least being allowed and confirmed by him. *Aeneas Sylvius* gave the true reason, why it was the more common opinion, that the pope is above a council, viz. because popes gave bishopricks and archbishopricks; but councils gave none.

From this oath to the bishop of Rome, it is apparent that he has as much authority in that church, and over all in it, as if he were believed infallible, since both the doctrine, worship and government of their church are determined by him, to whose sentence all must not only submit, but be concluded by it in their subscriptions, worship, and other practices. So that the opinion of the pope's fallibility, gives such persons no ease or freedom, but brings them under endless scruples and perplexities by the obligations and oaths that are imposed upon them, which bind them to a further obedience and compliance, that is consistent with a fallible authority.

And therefore their principles being so incoherent, that they cannot maintain both their charge against us of *heresy* and *schism*, (for if *Leo X.* was not infallible, *Luther* was no heretic,) and their opinion of the pope's fallibility, and at the same time keep a good conscience; we must expect one of these three things from men of that principle, either that they shall quite throw off the pope's tyrannical yoke, and assert their own liberty, reserving still their own opinions, as was done in *K. Henry VIII.*'s time, or that they shall join in communion with us, or that they shall continue as they are, complying with every thing imposed on them by the court of Rome, preferring policy to a good conscience, studying by frivolous distinctions to reconcile these compliances with their principles, which any man may easily see are inconsistent.*

We are told indeed (Introd. to P. A.) "that the *personal infallibility* of the *pope* is no part of the catholic faith, and is disbelieved by almost every catholic in the world." But there are others that say it is, and is grounded on the same promises which make

* *Bp. Burnet's defence of the English ordinations*, Ptes. 1, 26.

him head of the church. And so, as to the *deposing power*, this author grants that "it has been the opinion of several popes (and councils too) but that it is no matter of faith." But whose judgment are we to take in this matter, according to the principles of their church? a private man's of no name, no authority; or of those popes and councils who have declared it, and acted by it? And can any man of their church, justify our relying upon his word, against the declaration of popes and councils? But suppose the question be about the sense of his own rule, *the council of Trent*: what authority has he to declare it, when the pope has expressly forbidden all prelates to do it, and reserve it to the apostolic see? We know very well that the pope's infallibility and temporal power, is the opinion of the Italians; and the pope himself has always patronised and promoted this opinion, and encouraged and advanced the maintainers of it.*

The prevalence of these ultramontain notions, (i. e. pope's infallibility and temporal dominion,) so hostile to the security of our state, and the countenance they experienced from the Roman court *down to our time*, says Dr. O'Connor, is manifest from Brodinus's *descriptio Hiberniæ*, published at Rome in 1721, in which the same doctrine is strenuously maintained, and he affirms that it is the *universal opinion* of the Irish people!—This work has the *approbatio S. Magistri apostolici* prefixed to it, and is dated from the Minerva, 1721! See O'Connor's 2d. letter, p. 94, 1810, where he proves that "the pope's temporal dominion over Ireland is maintained by Irish synods and Irish ultramontain bishops, *down to our time*." Dr. Burke too, late popish bishop of Ossory, declares that if the *pope* was not *infallible* in deciding

* Those honest and loyal secular English priests, Widdington, alias Preston, F. Walsh, &c. that ventured to write against this usurped power of the popes over kings in *temporals*, were persecuted almost to death by the Roman bishop. See Dr. O'Connor's second Letter, *passim*. The Irish Romanists who signed the *Loyal Remonstrance* (or protestation of their loyalty) remained under *excommunication* from 1644 to 1691. These men, although pronounced by the holy see *schismatici* and *favourers of heresy*, died saints, according to Dr. O'Connor, p. 167, and we fully agree with this Dr. that an unjust *excommunication* recoils on those who denounce it, and is invalid, even though pronounced by Popes and Cardinals, p. 140.

questions of faith (without a general council) the synagogue would be better off than the church. And this he proves to be the opinion of the Gallican church, "although some persons, either deceived themselves, or wishing to deceive others, disseminate the contrary opinion among the vulgar;" Hib. Dom. p. 167.—Dr. Milner also, the pope's vicar *apostolic*! upholds his master's power, as highly as it can be carried; only excepting that principle of the deposition of kings, which even out of common prudence he could not at this time avow. As to the pope's power over bishops and their sees, he maintains it without the least reserve. And in the Supplement to his Pastoral letter, he affirms that "the briefs of Pius VI. are now as much a *dead letter* as the epistles of St. Peter are. They both equally *require* the living voice and authority of the chief pastor, to *pronounce* upon their *meaning* with respect to all controversies that grow out of them."*

It is absurd then in Dr. O'Connor, to pretend to explain what *the genuine* doctrine of the pope's supremacy is, and in what cases we may or may not resist him, unless Dr. O'C. can prove that he himself has authority to declare and model these points, in opposition to the decrees of councils and *the supreme spiritual authority of the chief pastor*, as Dr. Milner styles it, sequel. 35.—"The orders of the supreme pastor are to be obeyed, whether he be infallible or not," according to the Papist Misrepresented, London, 1808; and consequently Romanists are bound by the doctrine of their church to act, when the popes shall require it, even according to the *deposing* power; for it is confessed, that "popes have owned the deposing doctrine, and acted according to it." But, if men may make use of their *private judgment*, and refuse to submit to the *supreme pastor's* dictates, what is become of that admirable unity of the Roman church, and of "the efficacy of St. Peter's see in consolidating and supporting the stability of the entire episcopacy."

For thus making use of his private judgment in opposition to papal decrees, Dr. O'C. very truly expects to

* See An Address to the Roman catholics of England; occasioned by Dr. Milner's sermon at St. Chad's, Birmingham, by Rev. T. Le Mesurier, rector of Newton Longville, Bucks, 1810, p. 100.

be pronounced an *heretic* and *schismatic*, (p. 37.) and indeed this has been the lot of all those who come forward to declare an opposition to the pope, as was lately the case with a Romish bishop, (J. Febronius,) who honestly confessed that "unless an effective reformation, (nisi reformatio effective fiat, pref. ded. to Clement, 13, 1763,) took place in the Romish church, a re-union of protestants with the church of Rome would never happen." I am not ignorant, says he, that I propose very disagreeable things to your courtiers, and I know too, to what dangers they expose themselves, who write after this manner; *exacientur calami adversus hoc scriptum, excitabuntur librorum censores, ac sanctum officium, (i. e. the inquisition) pulsabitur importune, donec continuatus Romæ index prohibitorum suo illum registro inseruerit.*—The author of the book, entitled, *Moyens surs et honnestes pour la conversion des tous les heretiques*, Cologne, 1681, freely gives up the Council of Trent, the infallibility of the church, but especially the authority of the pope, whom he proves from scripture and antiquity to be an *usurper*. "There are some, says he, who would have the pope's authority confined within the bounds which the Councils of Constance and Basil had prescribed; but they never understood the moral impossibility, not only of making the popes consent to it, but suppose they were constrained to consent to these rules for a time, to make them observe them always. And experience confirms what I say, with reference to these councils, which have put no stop to their career; for have they not called others in Italy, which have destroyed whatever these had established? Have they not been so sacrilegious as to raise out of the Roman Edition, the council of Basil from the number of Œcumenical councils? Is it possible, that with the impiety and ambition with which the court of Rome is made up, and with the enormous power which the popes possess, that they should be reduced to submit to the Council of Constance? And even that would signify nothing, for that Council gives them too much authority, &c.—For my part, I say, that if God doth not inspire some great prince to do it, I say that a reformation will come as soon by means of the devil as the pope. The court of Rome professes an abhorrence of calling General Councils, *Concilio semper abhorrito da Pontefici*, says cardinal Pallavicini." That

this author was of the Roman communion is evident, not only from many passages in the book itself, but from this circumstance also, that the archbishop of Thoulouse caused it to be reprinted.

We may add also Scipio Ricci, who in a provincial Council at Pistoia in 1786, passed certain constitutions, condemning many of what we call errors or popery. Not to speak of Richer, Launoi, Dupin, Courayer, F. Paul, and even Natalis Alexander, (whose ecclesiastical history was ordered to be burnt by Pope Clement X.) not bishops indeed, but having much more learning than any bishops of those times; yet who exposed themselves to the most severe danger, by only hinting at reforms.

The bad success of Conferences between theologians of both parties, (which the Introductio to P. A. recommends, as a proper means of closing our differences,) has been clearly shown by a Roman bishop: "of all Conferences," says Febronius, (Pref. de Stat. Eccl.) the event was the same; peace was not in the least promoted by such means. Therefore, this method, which so many experiments have proved fruitless, has not been attempted in our age.—The only path which appears to me left for the attaining this desired end, is that all our discipline should be restored to that state, in which it was before our adversaries, not without foundation, complained of the unjust yoke and excess of power. By the removal of these scandals, our religion will appear holy and lovely to all the believers of the gospel."—We should think the time for *healing of schism and unity of the church* approaching, says Mr. Lasie in answer to the Bp. of Meaux, if the bishops in the Roman communion would think themselves at liberty, would be persuaded it was their duty, as answerable to God, to exert the full of their apostolic authority, each in his own diocese; where, as St. Cyprian says, Ep. 59. *iudex vice Christi cogitatur*; he is to be esteemed as judge in the place of Christ. And, Ep. 68. speaks of the bishops in general, as "*gubernandæ ecclesiæ libram tenentes* : holding the balance of church government."

I am inclined to believe that if your Lordship in particular, and other bishops in the Gallican church were at liberty, each in his own district, to regulate such

matters as you might do with a good conscience, things might be brought to bear so; from such a beginning of reformation, as that though men might differ in some particular opinions, as they always will, yet that terms of communion might be adjusted between us, upon catholic principles, to the honour of God and peace of his church. And if such a communion were begun, though but with a few bishops, who would exert their just power, it might bring the church to that state in time, in which all good men wish to see her. And if a catholic communion were restored, we should see again the primitive face of the church.

But no step can be made towards this, while the bishop of Rome's supremacy ties up the power of all other bishops, in their own respective churches. And we hardly expect that he will give way to any thing that will in the least infringe the plenitude of his supremacy. You have made an experiment of it, in your General Assembly of 1682. And if he will not suffer his supremacy to be limited, and reduced to the standard of the ancient canons, we can see no remedy, but that it must be taken away. Why should we have any hesitation to take that out of the way, which is *the visible remora to the uniting of all christian churches*, and the restoring of catholic communion all the world over? To take that out of the way, which your bishops of France, as well as those of the Greek church, and ours in England, &c. are fully convinced is an usurpation? Against which you have often struggled, and still do complain. But we have thrown it off, seeing no other way possible to get from under its usurpation.— My Lord, I am satisfied that your church and ours are nearer to one another, as to this point of the supremacy, than you are with the church, at least with the court, of Rome.

We see the peace of the world better consulted by the divine providence, in many *independent kings*, than in *one universal monarch*; whose deputies, in far distant regions, could never be kept from revolts, as we have seen in great monarchies, though none was ever yet universal. And betwixt a king and his rebels, there is no interposing by his subjects; it would justly render such suspected who should argue on the rebels side. There-

fore the end must be the extermination of the one, or the other. Whereas in disputes between kings, other kings may interpose their mediation, and become guaranties of peace.—And yet the whole world is *one* kingdom to God, as it is written, Psalm 22. 28. “The kingdom is the Lord’s, and he is the governor among the nations.” How vain then would the dispute be between any of those nations, suppose France, Spain, or England, which of them were *this one kingdom*, when each of them, though greater than any other kingdom of the earth, would still be but a part of *this one kingdom*? Such we esteem the dispute to be between particular churches; which of them is the catholic church? We must say, none of them; though one be much greater and more potent than another, yet it is still but a part of the whole.

And as God has appointed no universal monarch, neither has he an *universal bishop*. And all the arguments which an universal bishop could use for unity and peace, and to end controversies, might be used by an universal monarch; and both prove equally fallacious, to the greater disturbance rather than settlement of that peace. But as our faith is dearer to us than our lives, so the mischief would be greater, if the whole church should be made to depend upon one; for then *Universa Ecclesia corruiat, si unus Universus cadit*. And if the church falls, the faith which is built upon it, must fall with it. This obliged the bishops of Rome when they set up for *universality*, to assert *infallibility* to themselves likewise; because indeed, less than that could not support so vast a charge, as that of the whole catholic church. But since their *infallibility* is fallen at least in France, we think it strange that their *universality* should survive it. An *universality*, which never was yet in fact! Never owned by the catholic church, or any churches out of the bounds of the Western empire; nor intended, when first used in the Western councils, to extend any farther.

How much safer has Christ consulted for his church, than to put it all into the hands of *one fallible man*? Idcirco copiosum fecit corpus Sacerdotum, ut si unus lacerare et vastare tentaverit, ceteri subveniant, (Cyprian, Ep. 67.) as in the case of Paulus Samosatenus. Thus

the peace of the world is preserved, and thus the peace of the church. And thus it is that God has disposed of both; whose foolishness is wiser than men.

It is not, to use the words of Mr. Spinckes, the supremacy of your bishop, nor the extent of his dominion, nor your arrogating to yourselves the name of the only catholics, nor any such outward mark or note, whereby your title to this claim can be made good. The only proper and sure way to judge of you aright, is that our Saviour prescribes for the discovery of false prophets: "by their fruits ye shall know them." Whilst your corruptions both in Faith, Worship, and Government, are so many and so foul, it is to no purpose to flatter yourselves, with the name of Catholics. You may assume to yourselves, as glorious titles as you please; but it is only by your faithful adherence to the directions of the gospel, as understood in the primitive times, and all the best and purest ages of our religion, that you can ever truly entitle yourselves to them.—May God of his mercy to the christian world, send a double, a decuple portion of Marcellus the 2nd's. reforming spirit upon his successors, and fill the conclave, as he did the house where the apostles met on the day of Pentecost, with his holy spirit, that *Rome* may again become a holy catholic and apostolic church indeed, and all the churches of her communion be at last delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. Hickes's letters, vol. 1.

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